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**Questions
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Historic Event



Grant and Lee
shown actual size.

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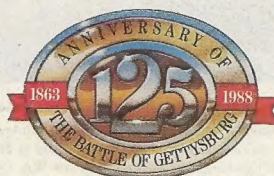
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The Gold & Silver Edition Civil War Chess Set

Kodak Absorbed Aristotype

I was especially interested in your article, "George Eastman" [September issue], because I'm interested in the local history of Jamestown, New York, located in the state's southwest corner.

At least one local historian has bragged that Jamestown was the home of the "forerunner of Eastman Kodak." Your article adjusted that perception.

In Jamestown, Porter Sheldon and Charles S. Abbott in 1889 founded a company they called American Aristotype Company. Their goal was to make a lot of money producing a more stable photographic paper. The company was quite large by Jamestown's standards. Its complex of four factory buildings and seven auxiliary buildings covered three city blocks.

American Aristotype was an example of a modern factory of the time, with buildings that were more ornately-appointed than usual. The engine room boasted white-tiled walls! The company was supposedly one of the very first to replace noisy, dangerous leather drive belts with "silent" chain drives.

After just four years in business, the complex burned to the ground. Because the business was solid and the outlook bright, everything was rebuilt. By 1899, Porter Sheldon decided to retire and leave his son, R.C. Sheldon, on the board with Mr. Abbott. The new president was George Eastman. At this reorganization the company became known as the General Aristo Company until its stock was bought up by the Eastman Kodak Company.

Part of the local plant remained in operation until 1920, but most of the operations had been moved to Rochester. Local legend has it that Eastman was unable to deal with local leaders. In any event, he let the property go for unpaid taxes, effectively removing Jamestown from the photography business. The buildings are gone now, and the land remains largely undeveloped in a residential area.

I suppose the local historian overestimated Jamestown's impor-

tance in the development of Eastman Kodak. While it was an impressive local concern, American Aristotype was probably just one of many small companies absorbed by Eastman. Thanks for the informative article.

Thomas J. Goodwill
Jamestown, New York

WWI Aircraft Insignia

Perhaps I am wrong but I believe that U.S. World War I fighter aircraft did not have the wing or body insignia pictured in the poster on page 43 of your September issue ["Wake Up, America!"].

My father was a young WWI pilot. Following the war, he returned with one-half of a fighter plane propeller (wooden with a copper metal tip). The souvenir prop contains the lettering "U.S. AIR SERVICE" and the insignia in color. The insignia is circular. The outer circle is red, the second circle is blue, and the center one is white.

Keith A. Glasgow
Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired)
New Boston, Texas

According to Karl Schneide of the National Air and Space Museum's Aeronautics department, the star insignia shown on the poster was used prior to American entry in World War I, but discontinued in 1917 because from a distance it could be confused with the Maltese cross on German aircraft. It was replaced by three concentric circles as described above by Colonel Glasgow. The star insignia was reinstated after the war.

The Editors.

The editors welcome comments from our readers. While we endeavor to publish a representative sampling of this correspondence, we regret that limited space prevents us from printing every letter. Address correspondence to The Mailbox, American History Illustrated, Box 8200, Harrisburg, PA 17105. ★

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History Today



Witch Trial Memorial

Victims of colonial witch trials in Salem, Massachusetts will be memorialized by a bronze statue.

The seven-ton sculpture will depict three sisters—Rebecca Nurse, Mary Esty, and Sarah Cloyce—chosen as representing the hundreds of innocent people accused during Salem's witch hysteria of 1692. Two of the sisters were among twenty men and women executed; the third was imprisoned.

The witch hunts began in 1691 when a West Indian slave girl entranced several girls with voodoo tales. The girls, realizing they would get special treatment for displaying "possessed" behavior, later pointed out residents of Salem and neighboring towns as the cause of their torment. The accused were imprisoned and brought to trial, and those who persisted in denying their guilt were hanged.

Efforts to commemorate the witch trial victims met with ambivalence until sculptor Yiannis Stefanakis garnered support for the project. The Sons and Daughters of the Victims of Colonial Witch Trials, an organization of descendants, has selected the dramatic sculpture as its official monument.

A full-size prototype for the \$300,000 memorial is already complete. After sufficient funds are raised by the nonprofit Witch Trial Memorial Foundation, the statue will be cast in bronze. It will then be mounted on a boulder taken from Gallows Hill, site of the witch trial executions. Planners hope for a spring unveiling.

For more information or to make tax-deductible contributions,

write to the Witch Trial Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 310, Salem, Massachusetts 01970, or telephone 617-745-5422.

Nixon Library and Birthplace Being Built

Groundbreaking ceremonies for the Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace took place in Yorba Linda, California on December 2, 1988.

The simple farmhouse where Nixon was born in 1913 and where his family lived until 1922 will be restored and authentically furnished as part of the nine-acre library complex funded entirely by private sources. Half a million visitors a year are expected to visit the facility after its opening in 1990.

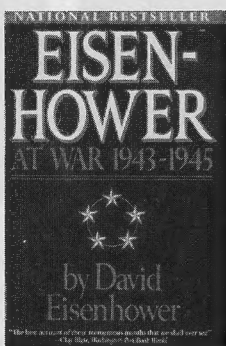
Library exhibits will document the early life of the thirty-seventh President, his four decades of public service, and America during his presidency. The library will also house copies of key Nixon presidential files.

As a spokesman notes, however, the bulk of Nixon administration papers will remain in the National Archives in Washington, pending resolution of disputes between the former President and the government.

"I have insisted that the Nixon Library and Birthplace be not a monument to the career of one man," Nixon has stated, "but a place where visitors and scholars will be able to recall the events of the time I served as President and to measure and weigh the policies my administration pursued."

Perhaps most remembered today for his involvement in the Watergate scandal, Nixon's significant presidential accomplishments include going to China and Russia for the first time to meet with their leaders in historic summits; achievement of history's first strategic arms treaty; and bringing an end to the Vietnam conflict. He is also the first American president to resign from that office.

For more information contact the Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace Foundation, 777 S. Main Street, Suite 206, Orange, California 92668 or telephone 714-834-1484. ★

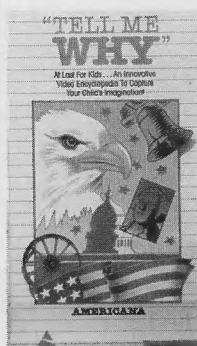


Eisenhower at War 1943-1945 by David Eisenhower, read by John MacDonald (*Books on Tape, Inc.*, P.O. Box 7900, Newport Beach, California 92658, 1-800-626-3333; 27 audio cassettes, 90 minutes each, \$8.00/cassette, or call for rental information).

David Eisenhower's 1987 bestselling historical study of his grandfather as commander of Allied forces in Europe during World War II equates to some forty hours of listening in this audio version and comprises a virtual chronicle of Ike's critical eighteen months as supreme Allied military commander. David Eisenhower summarizes this first of a planned trilogy on the Eisenhower years as "an account of Eisenhower's striving during the mightiest and most complex military intervention across oceans ever attempted. . . . I have tried to present the controversies in full, mindful that they persist but mindful also that the intervention served its purpose, and that it summoned . . . the energies needed to rebuild and the high purpose necessary to set the world on a course toward an era of progress and reconciliation."

Tell Me Why: Americana (Prism Entertainment, 1888 Century Park East, Suite 1000, Los Angeles, California 90067, 800-541-0454; VHS or Beta, 30 minutes, \$14.95).

Based on Arkady Leokum's books and syndicated newspaper column of the same name, the *Tell Me Why* video encyclopedia series for children is entertaining for adults as well. The series includes twelve



programs ranging from prehistoric animals to underwater life, minerals, weather, and space. The *Americana* volume answers children's questions about the Vikings, the American flag, the branches of American government, historic monuments and symbols, and U.S. armed forces. The film is enhanced by computer graphics and visuals, with patriotic background music. The brisk pace holds a younger audience's interest.

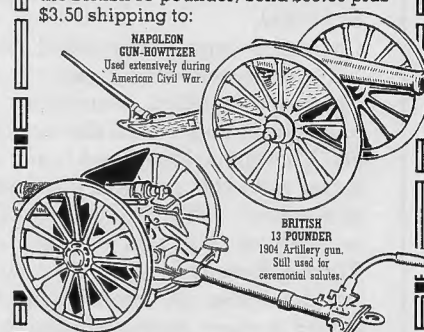
Ansel Adams (*Pacific Arts Video*, 50 N. La Cienega #210, Beverly Hills, California 90211, 800-538-5856 or 213-675-2233 in California; VHS or Beta, 59 minutes, \$29.95; Visa/Mastercard accepted).

Famed photographer Ansel Adams stands amid breathtaking scenery in this autobiographical film. Stills from Adams's childhood on the San Francisco peninsula and of pertinent historic scenes such as the great 1906 earthquake are interspersed with scenes in California's Yosemite Valley and other sites where Adams made his legendary photographs. "You can't help trying to record what you see," Adams explains, noting that as a young man during the 1920s he saw "vast possibilities" in photography. Trained as a musician but bitten by the shutter bug, the now-deceased photographer is remembered for his unsurpassed photographic interpretations of nature, his technical excellence, and his "Zone System." Georgia O'Keefe and other notable friends of Adams also appear in this low-key first-person production. ★

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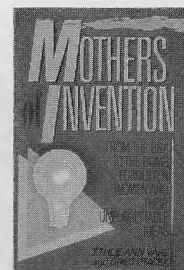
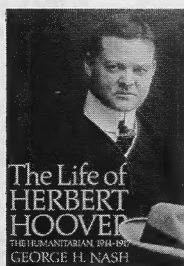
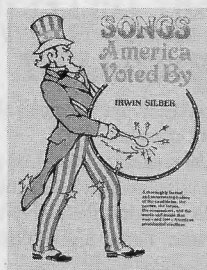
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Songs America Voted By by Irwin Silber (*Stackpole Books, Box 1831, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105, 1988; 320 pages, illustrated, paper, \$14.95 plus \$2.50 postage/handling*).

Campaign songs, here dubbed "the TV commercials of our past," rallied party loyalists, infuriated the opposition, and wooed the electorate. This collection of two hundred songs runs the gamut from John Dickinson's 1768 "Liberty Song" to "Stand Up and Cheer for Ronald Reagan." Also discussed are the issues and politicians involved in every American presidential election campaign. Musical scores are included in this timely and fun look at one of America's election traditions.

The Life of Herbert Hoover: The Humanitarian 1914-1917 by George H. Nash (*W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York City, 1988; 497 pages, illustrated, \$25.00*).

Widely (and unfairly) remembered today for namesake "Hoover-villes" during the Great Depression, Herbert Hoover's critical, positive contributions to society are often overlooked; that bleak era and the brilliance of his successor, Franklin D. Roosevelt, may be largely responsible. This second volume in George Nash's acclaimed biographical series on Hoover examines in detail his World War I directorship of the Commission for Relief in Belgium, which provided nearly \$1 billion in food and clothing to millions of civilians caught between the German army of occupation and the British naval blockade. In this humanitarian role Hoover was first catapulted into the public limelight.

Radios: The Golden Age by Philip Collins (*Chronicle Books,*

San Francisco, 1987; 119 pages, illustrated, \$25.00 cloth, \$14.95 paper).

"A radio in every room" was the slogan of American radio manufacturers from the 1920s through the early 1940s. During the latter years of that era, plastic created a revolution in both art design and mass production, enabling radios to be manufactured in clever forms that allowed them to fit the theme of any room in a home. Many companies marketed such radios as promotional pieces: Coca-Cola produced one that looked like a beverage cooler, and Trophy issued one shaped like an official league baseball. Author Philip Collins, one of the foremost antique radio collectors in the United States, presents more than one hundred of these imaginatively designed radios through a brief but informative text and beautiful color photographs.

Atoms in the Family: My Life with Enrico Fermi by Laura Fermi (*University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1988; 267 pages, \$10.95 paper*).

The world's first self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction was achieved on December 2, 1942, by a team of scientists operating an atomic pile they had erected under the football stands at the University of Chicago. In this reprint of a 1954 memoir, the wife of Enrico Fermi, the physicist who led that group of atomic pioneers, gives an account of Fermi's life that is appealing even to those with little interest in physics. Fermi's career is traced from his childhood, when he taught himself physics; to his receipt in 1938 of the Nobel Prize in physics; his family's emigration from Fascist Italy to the United States in 1939; his years at Columbia University, Los Alamos, and

the University of Chicago; and his March 1946 receipt of the Congressional Medal for Merit, which cited his work on the atomic bomb.

Hoover Dam: An American Adventure by Joseph E. Stevens (*University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1988; 352 pages, illustrated, \$24.95*).

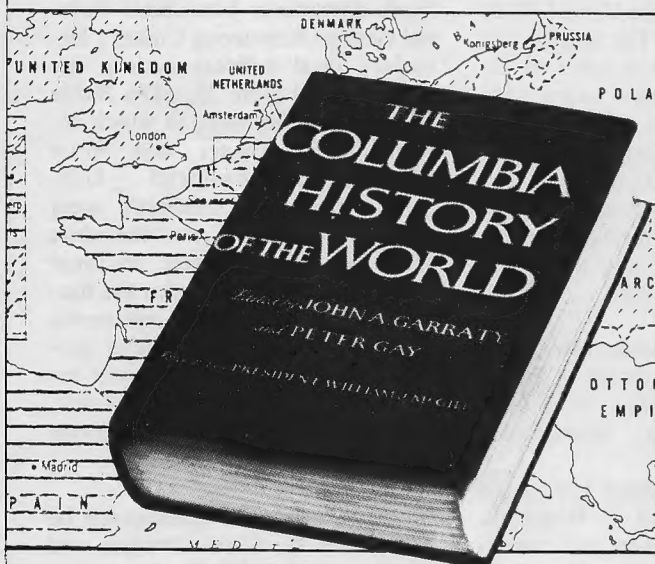
Between 1931 and 1936, thousands of laborers toiled in a rugged desert canyon on the Arizona-Nevada border to build Hoover Dam, an engineering marvel that ultimately harnessed the Colorado River and transformed the American West. An abundance of primary material recording that major triumph is woven into this tale of danger, hardship, politics, and labor disputes. Author Joseph Stevens lends the narrative an air of historical fiction through dramatic characterizations and artful writing.

Mothers of Invention by Ethlie Ann Vare and Greg Ptacek (*William Morrow and Company, Inc., New York City, 1988; 256 pages, \$17.95*).

Brown paper bags, drip coffee, leotards, the kewpie doll, chocolate chip cookies, and less ordinary items and processes such as bionics, meningitis serum, radioimmunoassays, nonreflecting glass, and diphtheria and rabies vaccinations are among those inventions created by women. But as authors Ethlie Ann Vare and Greg Ptacek point out, many of these female inventors have not received credit for their ingenuity. For example, Eli Whitney's cotton gin was designed in part and financed fully by Georgia plantation owner Catherine Littlefield Greene. More than one hundred brief biographies sketch the background to many female-founded inventions ranging from the mundane to the monumental.

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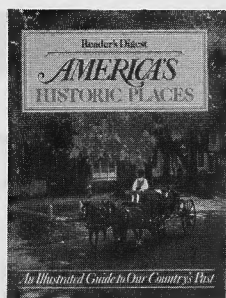
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America's Historic Places: An Illustrated Guide to Our Country's Past Richard L. Scheffel, project editor (*Reader's Digest, Pleasantville, New York, 1988; 352 pages, illustrated, \$26.95*).

Featuring concise textual descriptions, regional maps, and more than 350 color photographs, this useful oversized guide documents the nation's most significant historic sites, ranging from mansions and museums to battlefields and gold rush towns. Dividing the country into five major geographic regions, the guide provides a state-by-state overview of five hundred historical attractions, with descriptions of the sites today, their historical backgrounds, and locations, hours, and admission fees.

The Great Crash 1929 by John Kenneth Galbraith (*Houghton Mifflin, New York City, 1988; 206 pages, \$17.95 cloth, \$8.95 paper*). History does repeat itself, says renowned economist John Kenneth Galbraith in this reissue of his classic 1954 bestseller explaining the causes of the stock market crash of 1929. He adds here an introduction comparing "Black Monday"—October 19, 1987—to the great 1929 crash, demonstrating that although some economic, social, and political factors weren't identical, there were so many similarities that the 1987 "crash" was virtually inevitable.

Charleston's Maritime Heritage, 1670-1865: An Illustrated History by P.C. Coker III (*CokerCraft Press, P.O. Box 176, Charleston, South Carolina, 1987; 314 pages, illustrated, \$40.00*).

The distillation of years of research by its maritime-historian author, this oversize volume provides a de-

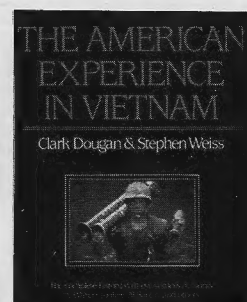
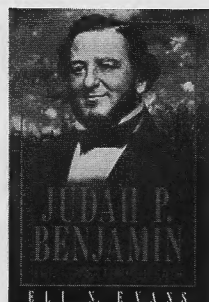


finitive history of the port of Charleston, South Carolina, from its seventeenth-century beginnings to its role as a center of colonial trade and subsequent involvement in the Revolution, the War of 1812, and the Civil War. The author has located a surprising number of excellent paintings; these, along with maps, charts, and color photographs of representative ship models combine with the text to make *Charleston's Maritime Heritage* one of the most comprehensive volumes available on any aspect of America's nautical past.

Judah P. Benjamin: The Jewish Confederate by Eli N. Evans (*The Free Press, New York City, 1988; 458 pages, illustrated, \$24.95*).

The first acknowledged Jew in the U.S. Senate, Judah P. Benjamin later became confidant to Confederate President Jefferson Davis and served in turn as Confederate attorney general, war secretary, and secretary of state. Dubbed "the brains of the Confederacy," the secretive, public-shy statesman wielded more political power than possibly any other American Jew. Benjamin has remained enigmatic since, largely because he destroyed most of his personal papers during the closing days of the Civil War. In this sensitive biography, author Eli Evans portrays a man who, falsely accused of involvement in the Lincoln assassination, ultimately fled America to become a leading lawyer in Britain. The fast-paced narrative explores anti-Semitism while providing a unique inside view of the Confederacy.

Custer Battlefield by Robert N. Utley (*National Park Handbook Number 132, Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government*



Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402; stock number 024-005-01022-0; 112 pages, illustrated, \$4.75 paper).

This National Park Service handbook documents Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer's legendary final military action, the controversial June 25, 1876 Battle of the Little Bighorn, in which Indians killed Custer and more than two hundred U.S. cavalrymen—but ironically went on to lose the war against the white man. A tour of Custer National Battlefield Park concludes the narrative. Excellent maps, numerous illustrations, and informative supplementary spreads on varied aspects of the Custer story make this, like other National Park Service guides, an outstanding value.

The American Experience in Vietnam by Clark Dougan and Stephen Weiss (*W.W. Norton & Company, New York City and London, 352 pages, illustrated, \$39.95*).

Military historians Clark Dougan and Stephen Weiss, who produced an acclaimed twenty-five-volume series entitled *The Vietnam Experience*, again team up to provide a dramatically illustrated one-volume work that describes and pictures the key events of the war. Included are sections on the road to war, the American build-up in Vietnam, stalemate, the Tet offensive of 1968, the invasion of Cambodia, the struggle on the American home front, the North Vietnamese Easter offensive of 1972, the fall of Saigon, and the war's aftermath. A balanced, lucid text, supplemented by several eyewitness accounts, along with outstanding photographs, many in color, make this one of the best single-volume overviews of the Vietnam conflict. ★

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174328. George Harrison—Cloud Nine. Got My Mind Set On You, more. (Dark Horse)

134347. Huey Lewis: Small World. Latest good time rockers include Perfect World, more. (Chrysalis)

115356. Vivaldi, The 4 Seasons—Trevor Pin-nock. (Archiv DIGITAL)

180187. Bruce Hornsby & The Range: Scenes From The Southside. The Valley Road, more. (RCA)

100008. Randy Travis: Old 8x10. Honky Tonk Moon, Deeper Than The Holler, more. (Warner Bros.)

125179. Tchaikovsky, 1812 Overture: Nutcracker Suite; more—Solti. (London DIGITAL)

163629. Whitesnake. Still Of The Night, Give Me All Your Love, more. (Geffen)



100517

200596. U2: Rattle & Hum. Live set includes I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For, Desire, more. (Island)

182522. Dirty Dancing/Original Soundtrack. (I've Had) The Time Of My Life, more. (RCA)

200478. Metallica: And Justice For All. One, Blackened, title song, more. (Elektra)

100603. Kenny G: Silhouette. We've Saved The Best For Last, more. (Arista)

154404. Chicago 19. Don't Wanna Live With-
out Your Love, Heart In Pieces, etc. (Reprise)

115457. Itzhak Perlman: French Violin Show-pieces: Carmen-Fan-
tasy, Havanaise, more. (DG DIGITAL)

144578. The Judds: Greatest Hits. Give A Little Love, Mama He's Crazy, etc. RCA

223559. Beach Boys: Endless Summer. 20 Greatest Hits.

115306. Handel, Water Music—Trevor Pin-nock. (Archiv DIGITAL)

100601. Squeeze: Classics. Take Me I'm Yours, Striking Matches, Tough Love, more. (A&M)

104898. Cream: Disraeli Gears. Sunshine Of Your Love, more. (Polydor)

173233. James Galway: Greatest Hits. (RCA)

154633. Steve Win-wood: Roll With It. Don't You Know What The Night Can Do?, Holding On, etc. (Virgin)

100470. Vangelis: Direct. (Arista)

153582. Tracy Chapman: Fast Car, Talkin' Bout A Revolution, Baby Can I Hold You, etc. (Elektra)



115436

152854. Whitney Houston: Whitney. Didn't We Almost Have It All, etc. (Arista)

150913. Van Halen: OU812. (Warner Bros.)

134073. Richard Marx—Hold On To The Nights, Endless Summer Nights, Should've Known Better, etc. (EMI)

163579. Segovia Plays Ponce, Rodrigo & Torroba (MCA)

100579. K.T. Oslin: This Woman. Money, title song, Hey Bobby, etc. (RCA)

100035. Robert Palmer: Heavy Nova. Simply Irresistible, etc. (EMI-Manhattan)

120768. 20 Greatest Love Songs Of The 50s & 60s. (Laurie)

123721. Jimmy Page: Outrider. (Geffen)

134321. Led Zeppelin: Houses Of The Holy—The Song Remains The Same, more. (Atlantic)

105392. Pops In Space—Boston Pops/Williams: Star Wars, Superman, more. (Philips DIGITAL)

173406. Jazz CD Sampler. 15 performances from Louis Armstrong, others! (PolyGram)

123790. James Taylor's Greatest Hits. Fire And Rain, Sweet Baby James, more. (Warner Bros.)

154537. Carly Simon: Greatest Hits Live Anticipation, You're So Vain, more. (Arista)

115541. Bach, Branden-burg Concertos 1-3—Pinnock. (Archiv DIGITAL)

172190. Elvis Presley: 18 No. 1 Hits (RCA)

134267. Mozart, Over-tures. Marriner. (Angel DIGITAL)

100591. Steve Miller: Born To Be Blue. Ya, Ya, more. (Capitol)

273965. Sting: Nothing Like The Sun. We'll Be Together, more. (A&M)

134647. J. R. Baker: Rhapsody In Electric Blue. Gershwin on synthesizer! (Newport Classic DIGITAL)

244006. Simon & Garfunkel: The Concert In Central Park. [1 disc] (Warner Bros.)

124705. Jethro Tull: Aqualung. (Chrysalis)

134408. David Sanborn: Close-Up. Slam, You Are Everything, Way, etc. (Warner Bros.)

153606. INXS: Kick. Need You Tonight, New Sensation, etc. DIGITAL (Atlantic)

153621. Beethoven, Symphony No. 7; more. Royal Phil. Previn. (RCA DIGITAL)

164165. Bobby McFer-rin: Simple Pleasures. Don't Worry Be Happy, All I Want, etc. (EMI)

125264. Horowitz in Moscow—Scarlatti, Mozart, Rachmaninov, others. (DG DIGITAL)

144313. Classic Rock: Vol. 1. Elton John: Bennie & The Jets, more. (MCA)

170348. Guns 'N' Roses: Appetite For Destruction. Welcome To The Jungle, It's So Easy, etc. (Geffen)

163322. Elton John: Greatest Hits, Vol. 1. Your Song, Daniel, others. (MCA)

160027. Alabama: "Live". Love In The First Degree, There's No Way, Dixieland Delight, etc. (RCA)

144659. The Best Of The Spencer Davis Group. Steve Winwood & Co. on Gimme Some Lovin', etc. (EMI)

100352. Diane Schuur: Talkin' Bout You. Title song, Funny (But I Still Love You), etc. (GRP)

104857. Benny Good-man: Sing, Sing, Sing. Title song, more. (RCA)

130230. Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young: So Far (Greatest Hits). Suite: Judy Blue Eyes, more. (Atlantic)

124546. The Moody Blues: Sur La Mer. I Know You're Out There Somewhere, No Lies, etc. (Threshold)

143293. Glenn Miller Orchestra: In The Digital Mood. (GRP)

114780. Cinderella: Long Cold Winter. Gypsy Road, Don't Know What You Got (Till It's Gone), etc. (Mercury)

154358. Slatkin Con-ducts Pictures At An Exhibition, more—(RCA DIGITAL)

144659. The Best Of The Spencer Davis Group. Steve Winwood & Co. on Gimme Some Lovin', etc. (EMI)

100352. Diane Schuur: Talkin' Bout You. Title song, Funny (But I Still Love You), etc. (GRP)

104857. Benny Good-man: Sing, Sing, Sing. Title song, more. (RCA)



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The 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy remains a mystery for millions of Americans. Astonishingly, even after a quarter-century, his death poses perplexing questions. Many still seek accurate, convincing—and final—answers.

Lights and Shadows

Destiny in Dallas (Part II)

by Edward Oxford

THE DAYS AND NIGHTS of twenty-five years have come and gone.

A flame, said never to go out, still burns over the grave of President John F. Kennedy, who rests on a hillside in Arlington National Cemetery overlooking Washington, D.C.

Marked by a plain stone in a graveyard near Fort Worth, Texas, repose the mortal remains of Lee Harvey Oswald.

Police officer J. D. Tippit rests in a memorial park on the outskirts of Dallas, Texas.

The body of Jack Ruby lies beneath a stone marker in a Chicago cemetery.

On the sun-bright afternoon of November 22, 1963, all four men had been in Dallas, each bound to his own purpose. Then, in ways still not fully understood, their destinies converged.

The assassination of Kennedy and the murders of Tippit and Oswald stand apart from all other crimes in twentieth-century America. No other events have been the focus of such intense and sustained scrutiny, have so resisted clear solutions in the minds of so many people, or have held more potential for national and international implications. The men involved have been laid to rest, but the controversy and questions have not.

For millions who recall those events, some or all of the most troubling questions surrounding Kennedy's assassination still remain unanswered. Who shot the President? Why was Kennedy killed? How many assassins were involved? How many shots did he or they fire? From where did the gunfire originate? What was Oswald's role in the assassination? How does Tippit fit into the puzzle? Did Oswald kill Tippit? When Ruby shot Oswald, was he acting on his own or under orders? Was the President's death the result of a conspiracy? Were U.S. government agencies in-



The Warren Commission's 1974 Report on the Kennedy assassination, in which it concluded that lone gunman Lee Harvey Oswald had killed the President, was followed by twenty-six supporting volumes of evidence and testimony (below). But when researchers examined the data closely, they found much of it contradictory or inconclusive.

involved? Were foreign governments or their agents involved? Was organized crime involved?

For some students of the assassination, of course, there are no such uncertainties. They have studied the testimonies, read the transcripts, and sorted out the speculations. For them, the evidence for a lone assassin is compelling; the truth is already in hand.

Attorney David W. Belin, for example, a former assistant counsel to the Warren Commission, holds fast to the one-gunman scenario. He has written two books in support of the Commission's view: *November 22, 1963: You Are the Jury** and *Final Disclosure***. "I am familiar with the opinion polls on the assassination," says Belin. "But sometimes the majority is not right, but wrong. The polls really show how much people can be swayed by the assassination sensationalists. There is not one point they bring up that I can't answer and rebut."

But many others disagree. Doubts persist. Indeed, with time's passage, some of those who at first felt certain they knew what happened are no longer quite so sure.

Even Marina Oswald Porter, Lee Harvey Oswald's widow, has, after twenty-five years, reached a new perspective.

In an interview in the November 1988 issue of *Ladies' Home Journal*, she points out: "I know I once testified that I looked in his eyes and I saw he was guilty. It seems very different now. I think back, and I realize that the look in his eyes was scared.

"I didn't realize how they led me. I didn't know you aren't supposed to lead a witness. I think the Warren Commission used me as a spokesman to advance their theory of a single gunman, because it comes out stronger; after all, the wife knew. There was only a prosecution, no defense, and I buried him. I was introduced as a witness, and I became his executioner."

Porter's insights dramatize the strange interplay of lights and shadows that half-reveal and half-conceal the



truth of the tragic happenings in Dallas.

In *Reasonable Doubt****, a book about the Kennedy assassination, author Henry Hurt asks: "If Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, killed John Kennedy, why is there not a *single* clean, indisputable piece of evidence linking him to the actual murder? Why is it all so grindingly confusing and contradictory?"

Elusive. Baffling. Ambiguous. The search for a convincing, logical solu-

tion—if one exists—has proven, for those who venture upon it, labyrinthine.

The Warren Commission

The first full-scale official investigation was summed up in the 888-page report of the Warren Commission, headed by United States Chief Justice Earl Warren. The Commission concluded that a lone assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, had shot and killed President Kennedy. Oswald, acting alone, had killed police officer J. D. Tippit. And Jack Ruby, acting alone, had killed Oswald.

The Warren Report—released in September 1964, just ten months after Kennedy's death—gave America a quick and uncomplicated verdict. It brought assurance to a citizenry badly shaken by the confusing and frightening events in Dallas. The facts had been found and revealed; the nation's government had kept faith with the people.

Or so the Report attested.

The Warren Commission subsequently published twenty-six volumes of testimony, evidence, and exhibits that formed the foundation for its findings. These volumes were meant to confirm the Report. Ironically, they weakened it. As curious individuals carefully reviewed the ten million words and hundreds of photographs, some of them came to ponder, to question, and finally to dispute much of what they found.

At the fragile forefront of these truth-seekers were the first "critics" of the Warren Report.

Sylvia Meagher, for example, was at her office desk in New York City that tragic Friday in November 1963. "I felt very bitter," she recalls. "I said sarcastically to some other office workers, 'Don't worry, they'll pick up a Communist for doing this.' Barely an hour passed, and there was the Communist—the defector with the Russian wife: Oswald. At once, I was skeptical. It was

*November 22, 1963: You are the Jury by David W. Belin (Quadrangle, 1973).

**Final Disclosure by David W. Belin (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988).

***Reasonable Doubt by Henry Hurt (Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1986).

The House Select Committee on Assassinations, which issued its report in 1979, agreed with the Warren Commission in concluding that Oswald had killed the President. But it surmised in addition that a conspiracy had probably existed and that (based on acoustical evidence) more than one gunman had been involved.

all too pat. It came together too neatly.”

The more Meagher analyzed the Warren Commission volumes, the more she discovered what she terms as “contradictions, misrepresentations, and fabrications.” On her own she painstakingly created a master index* that cross-referenced the Report with the twenty-six supporting volumes, subject to subject, name to name.

She also wrote *Accessories After the Fact*,** which critically analyzed the Warren Report.

Josiah Thompson, author of *Six Seconds in Dallas*,*** was a graduate student at Yale University when he heard about the assassination. He remembers: “The first flash over the radio was that Oswald was caught and seemed to be a left-winger. It sounded crazy. We went to a friend’s house that Saturday night and he said, ‘Oswald will never stand trial.’”

Thompson recalls driving to Washington, D.C., to go through the Capitol rotunda, where Kennedy was lying in state. “We all thought, ‘It’s almost going to break. This is too blatant. There are bright newsmen working on this thing.’ But there weren’t.”

Maryland researcher-writer Harold Weisberg has written the four-volume *Whitewash***** series as well as several other books on the assassination. To search out even the smallest detail, he filed one Freedom of Information suit after another against various government agencies. Because of Weisberg’s persistent beseechments, tens of thousands of pages of government records on the matter—notably FBI files—have entered the public domain.

Weisberg, now in his seventies, still wages his single-minded effort: “Maybe I can prove Andy Jackson right: One determined man becomes a majority.”

Mary Ferrell, a legal secretary in Dallas, has become a kind of living encyclopedia on the assassination. Two



entire rooms in the Ferrell house are filled with forty thousand index cards, clippings, and records dealing with the subject. “At ten to one that day,” remembers Ferrell, “the radio said the police were looking for the assassin. It gave out a description that would fit half a million men around here. I figured they’d never catch him. At seven after one we heard the President

was dead. Then, all the way across town, they catch the man. And it’s only ten to two. Then, we heard the description of Lee Harvey Oswald. It didn’t fit what we heard an hour before. I just couldn’t believe it.”

As for the continuing quest for a solution, she feels that “We don’t have the real answer. And we won’t know—not in our lifetime. But I feel that present-day researchers should leave a record of their findings so that future scholars can maybe get the answer to it.”

Growing Doubts

These and other skeptics led the way toward what they hoped would be the historical truth of the assassination and related events. In a sense, they weren’t just questioning words on paper—or words *not* on paper. They were questioning governmental power.

One counter-critic castigated the independent researchers as a “curious assortment of flotsam and jetsam” who “keep vigil at the National Archives, hoping for new shards of information to bolster their special interests.”

Appreciated or not, the skeptics continued their lonely, wearying, seemingly thankless task. In time, their “common-man” questionings of the government struck a resonant chord among a growing number of citizens.

Against the backdrop of turbulent times—the Cold War, Vietnam, civil rights, the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert Kennedy, the Great Society, feminism, counterculture, and Watergate—the rifle-fire in Dealey Plaza could somehow still be heard.

In 1967 New Orleans district attorney Jim Garrison began probing the Kennedy killing. He sensed “that there were other people besides Lee Harvey Oswald involved.” Two years later Garrison brought to trial a prominent local businessman, Clay Shaw, for conspir-

*Master Index to the JFK Assassination Investigations by Sylvia Meagher (Scarecrow Press, 1980).

**Accessories After the Fact by Sylvia Meagher (Bobbs-Merrill, 1967)

***Six Seconds in Dallas by Josiah Thompson (Random House, 1967).

****Whitewash by Harold Weisberg (H. Weisberg, 4 volumes, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1974).

The Warren Commission concluded that all of the shots fired at the President's motorcade had come from the Texas School Book Depository. A number of witnesses, however, thought some had originated in Dealey Plaza; in the photograph below, police and bystanders converge on the apparent source of gunfire.

acy to assassinate John Kennedy. Shaw was found innocent, but the tumultuous, two-month trial intensified interest in the assassination question.

Disenchantment. Skepticism. Intrigue in high places.

Well-respected journalists who at first had embraced the Warren Report without question began to have second thoughts. Bit by bit, revelations by government figures and agencies raised doubts.

The Warren Commission, a dismayed public learned, apparently had had its findings in mind—if not in hand—even before it started its work.

It took Weisberg six years to convince the government that it should let him have a copy of the January 27, 1964 Warren Commission executive session. That closed-door meeting had taken place before the Commission even started its search for facts. The transcript revealed this telling exchange between chief counsel J. Lee Rankin and Commission members Richard B. Russell and Hale Boggs:

Mr. Rankin: "Part of our difficulty is that they [the FBI] have no problems. They have decided it is Oswald who committed the assassination. They have decided no one else was involved."

Senator Russell: "They have tried the case and reached a verdict on every aspect."

Representative Boggs: "You have put your finger on it."

This startling pre-casting of events was apparently a reflection, in part at least, of the personalities and wills of President Lyndon B. Johnson and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover.

A week after the assassination President Johnson, placed in office as a result of the events in Dallas, established the Warren Commission. Johnson faced his first presidential election in 1964, and it behooved him to clear the troubled air before election day.

J. Edgar Hoover hadn't even wanted such a commission to be created. Yet, within ten days, the FBI put together a supposedly comprehensive report. The Bureau said it had thoroughly documented Oswald's guilt.

The image of the alienated Oswald as the lone assassin appears to have been virtually set in the minds of the Commission members. Expediency, rather than objectivity or thoroughness, seems to have been the hallmark



of their deliberations.

Although the Commission styled itself along the lines of a Congressional committee, it held its hearings in secret. Staff members did much of the work. The staff in turn relied on the FBI and the Secret Service to single out those persons to whom the Commission should pay attention.

The FBI had conducted 25,000 interviews to gather testimony. The Secret Service held 1,500 such interviews. The Warren Com-

mission used the testimony of 521 of these people. Only ninety-four actually appeared before the panel, the remaining witnesses giving testimony to staff members or supplying written affidavits or statements. Not once during the questioning of the ninety-four witnesses were all seven Commission members present.

More than a hundred people who had been in Dealey Plaza when Kennedy was shot were never called to testify. At least sixty individuals interviewed by the FBI later claimed that the agency had altered their accounts of what they had seen. Others felt their testimony was simply disregarded.

Overtones of Conspiracy

Something, whether in what the Warren Report said or didn't say, seemed wrong. Slowly, in the minds of many observers, there grew the almost incredible possibility that the government, or at least some individuals in it, had tried to use the Report to cloak a conspiracy.

Events preceding the assassination certainly allowed for the possibility of a conspiracy. During the nine months prior to Kennedy's death, the Secret Service had received word of more than four hundred threats on the President's life. Four days before he arrived in Dallas, Kennedy visited Miami, Florida. The Secret Service received word that a plot was underway to kill him—possibly in Miami. The shooting was to be done from a building by means of a high-powered rifle. The Secret Service, alarmed by the warning, switched Kennedy from a planned motorcade to a last-minute helicopter flight into Miami.

Arthur Schlesinger, in his book *Robert Kennedy and His Times*, was to speculate: "The Chief Justice and his colleagues had perforce to depend greatly on the intelligence agencies. They did not know that the agencies had their own secret reasons to fear a thorough inquiry. If it

A photograph (below) taken just after the President was shot, failed to show anyone in the purported assassin's lair on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository. But a motion picture sequence made minutes earlier by spectator Charles Bronson is said to show at least two, and possibly three, figures on the sixth floor.

came out that the putative killer might have had intelligence connections, domestic or foreign, that FBI agents should have had him under close surveillance, that CIA assassins might have provoked him to the terrible deed, those agencies would be in the deepest trouble. But if Lee Harvey Oswald could be portrayed as a crazed loner acting on some solitary impulse of his own, they would be in the clear."

Senator Richard Russell, a Warren Commission member, stated in 1970 that he never believed Oswald had acted alone. He contended, however, that most of the other Commission members *wanted* to show that Oswald acted alone.

In an interview with an *Atlantic Monthly* reporter shortly before his death, Lyndon Johnson said: "I never believed that Oswald acted alone, although I can accept that he pulled the trigger." Johnson said that when he had taken office he found that "we had been operating a damned Murder Incorporated in the Caribbean." A year or so before Kennedy's death, Cuban authorities in Havana had intercepted a CIA-backed assassination team. Johnson speculated that Dallas might have been a retaliation for this thwarted attempt to kill Cuban Premier Fidel Castro.

In 1976 the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Activities took a look into this wilderness of mirrors. This investigative panel concluded that a combined CIA-FBI cover-up had withheld crucial information from the Warren Commission regarding the possible involvement of Castro in the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

The panel's heavily censored report stated that Richard Helms, while deputy director of the CIA, had failed to inform director John McCone—or the White House—of repeated attempts upon Castro's life by CIA-backed Mafia killers. Helms also failed to report these attempts in his testimony before the Warren Commission.

Helms allegedly had an aide pose as a personal representative of Attorney General Robert Kennedy to authorize a Cuban assassin, code name "AM/LASH," to kill Castro.

Castro was well aware of CIA attempts on his life. In



a September 7, 1963 speech he warned, "We are prepared to fight Kennedy and his brother Robert and answer them in kind. United States leaders should think twice if they are aiding terrorist plans to eliminate Cuban leaders; they themselves will not be safe."

Perhaps with some concern for his own safety, President Johnson later summoned Helms to his office and

demanding an accounting of the attempts to kill Castro.

Reputed West Coast crime figure John Roselli testified before the Senate Intelligence Committee that he had been recruited in 1960 by the CIA in a plot to kill Castro, and that he in turn had enlisted the aid of Chicago Mafia chieftain Sam Giancana for the same purpose.

Roselli reportedly informed the Committee that he believed his former co-conspirators in the Castro assassination plots had murdered Kennedy.

Giancana was also supposed to testify before the Senate Committee, but several days before his scheduled appearance in June 1975, he was mysteriously shot and killed with seven bullets at his Oak Park, Illinois home.

About a year later Roselli, too, was found dead. His corpse had been cut into pieces, stuffed into an oil drum, and floated out onto Biscayne Bay, Florida.

Judith Campbell Exner, mentioned in the Senate report as a "close friend" of Kennedy and the two mobsters, later stated that she had regularly carried envelopes back and forth between both the President and Giancana and the President and Roselli.

Senator Richard Schweiker, who served on the Senate Intelligence Committee, declared: "My view is that there was in fact a relationship between the Cuban connection and the assassination. And my view is that more than one person was involved."

The House Select Committee

By 1977, America had so many doubts about the Kennedy assassination—intensified by the Warren Commission failings, by the killings of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert Kennedy, and by the startling findings of the Select Committee on Intelligence Activities—that Congress launched a full-scale investigation into the matter.

Article continues overleaf; text continues on page 20

Inside the Archives

FOR THOSE WHO SEEK the deeper, fuller account of John F. Kennedy's assassination, there has been—and continues to be—one sure and sensible starting point.

The National Archives.

Throughout more than two decades, historians, authors, and researchers have gravitated to the great columned building on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C., seeking to study—and hopefully to unravel—the complexities surrounding this tragic event. For here reposes a vast collection of official reports, papers, and memoranda, most of it generated in the course of the government's two major inquiries into the Kennedy assassination—the Warren Commission (1964) and the House Select Committee on Assassinations (1977-79).

Marion Johnson, a staff member of the National Archives for forty years, has been in charge of the Warren Commission records ever since the documents began to arrive in 1964. "In the first few years after the Warren Commission," he recalls, "there was intense interest in the papers on the part of researchers and book writers. They came from all over the world. A resurgence of interest took place at the time of the Watergate hearings, then when the House Committee report came out, and also on the twentieth anniversary of the assassination. Now, with the twenty-fifth anniversary, there is another surge of interest."

The repository for the documents is a locked inner gallery on the sixth tier of the Archives. The rows of gray boxes, ranked shelf upon shelf to a height of six feet, resemble other groupings of records that fill the Archives' massive recesses. But these particular holdings constitute as dramatic a collection of official U.S. government papers as has been assembled in the twentieth century.

The Warren Commission's records and exhibits, preserved in more than six hundred file boxes and nine crates, fill an aisle that runs some thirty feet in length. The trove is rich in both volume and detail. Here is the original evidence gathered by the Commission: eight-millimeter and sixteen-millimeter films that include the famous Zapruder frames; scores of tape recordings made by various radio stations during the period of the assassination and its aftermath (one includes an interview with Father Oscar Huber, who administered the last rites to President Kennedy); stenotype notes of proceedings, ballistics studies, press clippings, staff memoranda, maps, photographs, and even an indexing one foot deep of the names, addresses, and phone numbers of persons mentioned in U.S. Secret Service reports concerning the assassination.

Microfilmed records of Warren Commission witnesses fill more than seventy-five feet of file-drawer space. These contain reports from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Secret Service, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Dallas Police Department.

Many of the thousands of pages of Warren Commission documents, like the ponderings of the Commission itself, relate to the life and activities of Lee Harvey Oswald. A recent random examination revealed an FBI report on a rumor that Oswald and Jack Ruby had spent a week with two Cubans in New Orleans; a Bureau account of a purported foretelling, in Mexico, that President Kennedy would be shot by one "Leo" Oswald; a letter from the FBI to the Commission concerning the four telephone numbers found in Oswald's pocket when he was shot; messages between the State Department and the American Embassy in Moscow regarding Oswald's years in Russia; Texas unemployment insurance claims for Oswald; and New York City school report cards for his grade-school days.

The most chilling of the Warren Commission's holdings are the "three dimensional" artifacts of the assassination. These items of physical evidence are kept in a specially secured section, excluded from the inspection of everyone but rarely authorized viewers. The clothing and personal effects of President Kennedy, treated with preservatives, are kept in boxes. Numerous autopsy x-rays and photographs of the President's body are retained as well. Various cases and containers hold possessions attributed to Oswald. They include, for example: one 6.5-millimeter Mannlicher-Carcano rifle with sling and cartridge clips; one .38-caliber Smith and Wesson revolver; copies of Oswald's payroll records at the Texas School Book Depository; a birth certificate for Oswald, dated October 18, 1939; a pocketbook edition of Ian Fleming's book, *Live and Let Die*; a Christmas card signed "Mother"; even aspirin found in Oswald's medicine chest.

Perplexingly, there is both more and less to the Archives holdings on the Kennedy assassination than first meets the eye. The masses of documents are both illuminating and confusing. They reveal a lot, but not everything. Seemingly, the "facts" are there, in almost excruciating detail . . . and yet, conclusive answers remain tantalizingly beyond reach.

Even after more than two decades, numerous buff-colored "Withdrawal Notice" cards are interwoven among the papers. Each such card, usually authorized by the FBI or the CIA, signifies that a given document has been withheld from public view—in certain cases for reasons of personal privacy. For example, one slim folder titled "Investigation and Evidence: Telephone



COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Calls” contains no fewer than sixteen withdrawal notices. What such “noninformation” means is left to speculation.

Just as frustratingly, some papers “released” for public access bear deletions. The Freedom of Information Act, which provides for disclosure of certain kinds of government-held documents, also exempts from disclosure other sorts of information. Obliterations of certain passages, names, or evidence in the Commission records are examples of such withholding. For instance, one two-page letter from FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover to the Warren Commission dated June 17, 1964 is, except for its salutation and closing, almost totally inked out.

Nevertheless, the bulk of the Warren Commission evidence has now passed into the public domain. Johnson estimates that all but twelve cubic feet of Commission documents have been released. These “unseen” papers would be roughly enough to fill a two-by-two-by-three-foot box.

“Obviously,” notes Henry Hurt, author of an assassination study entitled *Reasonable Doubt*, “the most sensitive and important information in the entire case could be in that small remaining portion of material. On the other hand, a large percentage of that remaining material possibly is information with little relevance to the case—information that could be embarrassing to individuals, or actually could comprise a sensitive intelligence source.”

Government authorities have stated that the papers contain nothing that would reveal a conspiracy in the assassination. But what, exactly, could these last few pages tell us?

IF THE WARREN COMMISSION FILES are intriguing, those of the House Select Committee are inscruta-

ble. Across a narrow passageway from the Warren Commission holdings, a long aisle of gray-boxed documents—the House Committee’s records on the Kennedy assassination—stretches into the half-light of the storage gallery. These papers (which also include considerable background information on the slaying of Martin Luther King, Jr.) form the basis for the Committee’s final report and its thirteen supporting volumes. They are, in a sense, a “continuation” of the Warren Commission papers. But they differ in one striking respect. The public will not be permitted access to them—unless Congress should rule otherwise—until the year 2029.

Such sealing is the norm. By custom the investigating committees of Congress put their papers under seal for fifty years. The purpose is to protect national security, to shield sensitive information sources, and to spare the reputations and feelings of persons related to matters of investigation.

Documents of the Warren Commission, assembled under the jurisdiction of the Executive branch of government, fall under the Freedom of Information Act. But the papers of the House Committee are under the sole authority of Congress. In the matter of those gray boxes, Congress is its own law, above all other law.

G. Robert Blakey, now a professor of law at the University of Notre Dame, was chief counsel to the House Select Committee and perhaps knows more about the contents of the sealed Committee files than any other person. “I worked with all these papers,” he said recently. “I know them. I initialed them as they were consigned to the Archives. And I can assure people that there is nothing new or startling in them. Yes, there are matters that are sensitive in terms of the nation’s intelligence agencies. Yes, there are matters perhaps sensitive in terms of personal lives of individuals. But there is nothing, I feel, of substantial nature that is new or different from what is already well known.”

To many who have spent years examining the Warren Commission papers, such an assurance may not be completely satisfying. The Warren Report was once officially proclaimed as the definitive statement on the assassination. It proved not to be.

It is fair to say that when finally given the opportunity, scholars will delve into the House Committee records with much the same skepticism their predecessors brought to the Warren Commission papers. And they will make up their own minds about what the documents contain and mean.

But be it this century or the next, the National Archives will be the first source of assassination data to which future historians will turn. ★

The House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA), after more than two years of testimony and deliberations, issued its report in June 1979. It judged, as had the Warren Commission, that Oswald had fired the shots that killed Kennedy. But it also reached the chilling conclusion that Kennedy was "probably assassinated as a result of a conspiracy." The Committee found no persuasive evidence, however, to implicate either the Soviet KGB or the American CIA in such a plot.

The House panel proposed, but did not prove, three possible conspiracy scenarios.

In one, the panel conjectured that Mafia mobsters could have gunned down Kennedy out of revenge, presumably to even the score with the President for his—and his brother, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy's—attacks on organized crime. Circumstantial evidence suggested that Mafia leaders Carlos Marcello of New Orleans and Santos Trafficante of Tampa, Florida may have been involved.

Marcello, the New Orleans crime boss, "had the motive, means and opportunity to have President John Kennedy assassinated," the Committee declared, although it made public no direct substantiating evidence.

Both Marcello and Trafficante denied any knowledge of the Kennedy killing.

In a second theory, the panel considered but rejected the possibility that the CIA plot to assassinate Castro had backfired, provoking the Cuban leader to retaliate against Kennedy.

In a third view, the panel left open the possibility that anti-Castro Cubans murdered Kennedy and tried to pin the blame on Castro.

The House panel placed the most credence in the Mafia scenario. The Committee speculated that although organized crime as a group may not have been involved, individual Mafia members may well have had a hand in the assassination.

Neither Oswald nor Ruby, the Committee held, were the "loners" portrayed in earlier reports. The panel noted that Oswald was familiar with the underworld activities of his uncle, Charles "Dutz" Murret, in New Orleans. It pointed out an association between Oswald and David Ferrie, a private investigator for Marcello. It cited other underworld links to Oswald.

The panel revealed as well that Ruby had numerous ties to organized crime elements.

The House Committee chided the Warren Commission for failing "to investigate adequately the possibility of a conspiracy to assassinate the President" and for conducting only a "limited pursuit" of complicity by organized crime. And the panel declared that the FBI and the Secret Service not only had failed to protect the President adequately, but also had failed to follow up on information regarding his murder.

Tantalizingly, the Committee reported the likelihood that a second gunman, lurking near the "grassy knoll" overlooking Dealey Plaza, had fired a shot at Kennedy. The panel based this finding on acoustical tests made by

sound experts. The microphone on the radio of a Dallas police motorcycle had inadvertently been left "on" during the motorcade. The sounds it picked up were recorded on a Dictabelt at the police radio center. The experts analyzed the sounds on the tape and pinpointed what they said was a fourth shot, coming from the grassy knoll.

But the panel was unable to identify any such gunman, or to prove any of the conspiracy theories. While it could suggest and indicate, it could not ascertain and resolve. For a bewildered public, major questions were left unanswered.

G. Robert Blakey served as the chief counsel for the House Select Committee. Today he is a professor of law at the University of Notre Dame. Looking back, he sees the Committee's work as creditable and its subject matter as elusively complex:

"We concurred with the Warren Commission that Oswald fired three shots. And we even reinforced the single-bullet theory. But we used an acoustical technique that the Commission didn't have [available], to examine the actual shooting. With it we established the high probability of a second shooter."

But the Committee's findings about a possible second gunman were to take yet another twist. At the behest of the Justice Department, the National Academy of Sciences reviewed the Committee's acoustical evidence. It then conducted its own study, concluding in 1982 that the Committee experts had misinterpreted the sounds on the Dictabelt.

Blakey feels that a third analysis of the tape may be needed to resolve the scientific stand-off. Which, in a perplexing way, seems to bring the question of the second gunman back to its starting point.

As a disturbing after-note, the House Committee revealed that its most sensitive files had been rifled. Someone had broken into the safe that contained physical evidence of President Kennedy's assassination—including autopsy photographs, x-rays, and the bullet said to have wounded President Kennedy and Governor Connally. But the intruder left fingerprints. They belonged to Regis Blahut, a CIA employee assigned as a liaison to the Committee. He was dismissed by the Agency.

The Grassy Knoll

Many assassination researchers feel that, despite the extensive efforts made by the Warren Commission, the House Select Committee, and nearly a dozen other investigative panels, numerous vital questions still await clear, convincing answers. Some glimmerings of the complexity—and the controversy—that yet attend the Kennedy tragedy might be sensed from a consideration of just a few of its confounding elements:

Doubts still linger, for example, as to the number and direction of shots fired during those confusing seconds in Dealey Plaza. This question is crucial to the assassination controversy, since its resolution would help to de-

Continued on page 42

Among the most securely guarded items in the National Archives files on the Kennedy assassination are the pieces of physical evidence gathered after the shooting. Objects pictured below (clockwise from upper right) include the T-shirt worn by Lee Harvey Oswald when he was shot by Jack Ruby; the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle found on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository and supposedly purchased by Oswald by mail order; a photograph of the shirt worn by President Kennedy when he was killed; enlarged frames from the assassination film sequence made by bystander Abraham Zapruder; the near-pristine "Magic Bullet" said to have struck both Kennedy and Governor John Connally; empty shells and an unused cartridge found in the sixth-floor storeroom; Oswald's passport; four shells found near the scene of Tippit's death; the .38-caliber revolver taken from Oswald when he was arrested; Oswald's Russian diary, purported by some to have been written in just a few sittings rather than over the period of months the dates suggest; a rifle ammunition clip from the sixth floor; and a camera belonging to Marina Oswald.





Collecting the West

Pictorial narrative by Richard H. Saunders

A notable art collection at the University of Texas at Austin presents a cross-section of America's great western artists—and of the now-vanished frontier they depicted.



SEVERAL of America's notable collections of western art had their genesis during the Great Depression of the 1930s, when a small group of young and enthusiastic businessmen—including Thomas Gilcrease, Amon Carter, Sid Richardson, and C. R. Smith—took advantage of depressed prices in the art market to begin collecting paintings and sculpture at modest prices.

Smith, who had moved to New York City after becoming president of American Airlines in 1934, soon began to surround himself with paintings and mementos of the Old West. His interest in western art continued during service as a major general in the U.S. Air Force and as U.S. secretary of commerce; he eventually assembled a collection of nearly one hundred paintings and bronzes.

During the past twenty years Smith gave the majority of his collection to the University of Texas at Austin. Housed in the Archer M. Huntington Art Gallery at the University, this collection, shown in part on the following pages, includes paintings by some thirty-five leading western artists. Today visitors can view and appreciate these works on several levels: stylistically; in context with the careers of the artists who created them and the historical events that inspired them; and in relationship to the phenomenal development of the American West and western art itself. ★

This portfolio is adapted with permission from Collecting the West: The C.R. Smith Collection of Western American Art by Richard H. Saunders (University of Texas Press, Austin, for the Archer M. Huntington Art Gallery, 1988; 212 pages, \$35.00). Copyright 1988 by the University of Texas Press.



CHARLES M. RUSSELL

Medicine Man 1916

Charles M. Russell loved the Indian. He spent months living among the Blackfeet in 1888, and he hated to see their way of life destroyed by the onslaught of the white "civilization." Although he painted the Indian in various activities, his favorite composition, if one may infer from its repetition in the artist's oeuvre, represented the Indian in procession, led by a noble brave. Medicine Man is one such example. A similar figure, with the caption "The Knight of the Plains as He Was," adorned Russell's personal stationery for many years.

Unlike many of his artist contemporaries, Russell was careful to choose details of hair style, dress, and trappings that would make his subjects recognizable by tribe—in this case, the Piegan of Montana. Even the horses in Russell's paintings bear distinguishing tribal markings; that ridden by the medicine man has red spots encircled by blue rings on its neck. These are "raid marks," each of which stood for a successful raid against an enemy.

This painting was a favorite of Nancy Russell, who never allowed her husband to sell the work.

HENRY FARNY

Council of the Chiefs 1896

Henry Farny, who achieved international recognition for his sensitive paintings of the American Indian, studied in Dusseldorf and Munich during the late 1860s and 1870s. For nearly two decades he worked as an illustrator for some of America's leading magazines, but by the 1890s he was concentrating on his paintings.

Farny developed a meticulous style in which figures and landscape were carefully rendered. He usually chose to paint the fierce warring tribes of the Northern Plains, and his works reflect a romantic view of their culture before subjugation by white civilization.

Council of the Chiefs is among Farny's most comprehensive studies of an Indian encampment. Clustered groups of tipis, grazing horses, and distant rugged mountains are woven into an imaginative, balanced composition. Some elements, such as the manufactured white shirt worn by the mounted Indian, reflect the intrusion of white culture. Yet the dominant image shows the Indians continuing an earlier life style.





OSCAR E. BERNINGHAUS

The Unsung Hero, the Mountain Man 1951

Oregon Trail 1951

C. R. Smith commissioned The Unsung Hero, the Mountain Man from Oscar E. Berninghaus in 1951, a year before the noted artist and muralist died. The subject was a familiar one to Berninghaus, for the mountain man had figured prominently in the history of St. Louis, his birthplace and home prior to his permanent move to Taos, New Mexico, in 1925. In the St. Louis Gazette and Public Advertiser of February 13, 1822, General William Henry Ashley, lieutenant-governor of Missouri, first advertised for "enterprising young men" to accompany his fur company's expedition of explorer-trappers and hunters up the Missouri River. St. Louis was also a launching site for wagon trains, guided by mountain men after the fur trade subsided in the early 1840s.

In Oregon Trail Berninghaus returned to another subject with which he was thoroughly familiar. In 1911 he had been commissioned by the Anheuser-Busch Brewing Company of St. Louis to paint a series of canvases showing the growth and expansion of America. Among these works were paintings of prairie schooners heading west. Eight pictures from this series were reproduced in a booklet entitled Epoch Making Events of American History, distributed to St. Louis school children in 1914.









FRANK TENNEY JOHNSON

Thornburgh's Battlefield 1934

Pursuing his interest in recording the vanishing frontier, Frank Tenney Johnson made his first trip to the West and Southwest in 1904 on a train pass provided by Field and Stream in exchange for illustrations. His extended trip took him from Colorado to Mexico photographing and sketching scenes that he used for the rest of his career. Johnson's paintings and illustrations of frontier subjects for magazines and novels were admired for their authenticity and accuracy of detail. Critics proclaimed that "his canvases will be the last painted by one who lived on a frontier that passed into history when the twentieth century began."

Thornburgh's Battlefield, in which the artist eulogized the heroism and drama of an unfortunate event in Indian-Anglo relations, was painted in 1934 at the height of Johnson's career. In 1879 near Milk River in Colorado, two hundred soldiers commanded by Maj. Thomas T. Thornburgh fought more than three hundred Ute Indians in a week-long struggle. The conflict began accidentally with an ill-conceived attempt by the U.S. government to agrarianize the Utes on the White River Reservation. Before reinforcements arrived, Thornburgh and eleven of his men were killed and forty-three wounded; thirty-seven Utes were killed. This battle, along with the murder of the U.S. Indian agent on the reservation, became the government's final justification for banishing almost all of the Utes to a reservation in Utah.



DEAN CORNWELL

Wealth of 1849 ca. 1949

Dean Cornwell's career as an illustrator was long and successful. His commissions included many illustrations for major publications and a number of murals for both public- and private-sector buildings. Cornwell was not a specialist in western themes, but he painted a number of such scenes and maintained close ties with such western artists as Charles M. Russell, Edward Borein, and Frank Tenney Johnson. Wealth of 1849 was probably

painted in about 1949 in recognition of the centenary year of the California Gold Rush. Cornwell had earlier dealt with the theme in a mural he produced for the Los Angeles Public Library. In its clear visual definition of an idea—the ethics of industry and enterprise—the painting exemplifies the mode of presentation and traditional subject matter typically found in American adventure illustrations and mural paintings during Cornwell's lifetime.



FRANK TENNEY JOHNSON

Mexican Revolutionaries 1919

For Frank Tenney Johnson, the nostalgia for the disappearing frontier was overshadowed in 1910 by the Mexican Revolution. The conflict provided the theme for this dramatic night scene, which presents a hushed moment with revolutionary figures gathered on the street. The tension of the night colors and the arrested action reinforce the clandestine nature of the meeting.

On his first trip to the region, Johnson wrote a letter to his wife in New York City in which he described his impressions: "I never saw a more beautiful night. The adobe houses shown up so clear and white in the approaching moonlight that I wanted to paint them just as I saw them." Johnson developed a technique of applying a vermillion undercoating to deepen and enrich the night colors of his paintings, and he soon became known for his distinctive night scenes of the Southwest.



WILLIAM ROBINSON LEIGH

The Roping 1914

William R. Leigh devoted his career to capturing the image of the cowboy and the Indian and their special chapter in American history. His focus included the horse. In his 1933 book The Western Pony, Leigh wrote: "I find in the West the truly typical and distinctively American motifs, a grandeur in natural surroundings, a dramatic simplicity in life which can be found nowhere else. In that life, in those surroundings, marvelously varied and abundant—the horse plays a major role."

Leigh's The Roping presents the ideal cowboy: rough, lean, and capable of manipulating a lariat and tracking a herd of stampeding cattle while riding a horse at full gallop. This was one of the artist's favorite themes: at least nine works by Leigh would portray single cowboys on galloping horses. All are similar in composition and have titles that suggest action and adventure.

MAYNARD DIXON

Top of the Ridge 1933

Maynard Dixon's Top of the Ridge is distinguished by its emphasis on a two-dimensional pattern of simplified shapes—elements characteristic of the mural designs that comprised much of the artist's work. Dixon's distinctive style, exhibiting a concern with rhythm, clarity, and flatness, apparently derived in part from his love of Hopi culture and art. The Hopi believed in nonattachment to preconceived forms and ideas and sought to break down the appearance of things to reveal the essence within.

Top of the Ridge stands in marked contrast to the action-packed, bronco-busting subjects generally favored by such other western artists as Frederic Remington and Charles M. Russell. Dixon wrote that his work "is not the regulation 'Wild West' type of painting. It aims rather to interpret the sense of freedom and loneliness of the land. I want my paintings to show the people as a part of that." ★



Presidents have received some unusual tributes, but rarely any so bizarre as that presented to Thomas Jefferson, “the People’s President,” by a Massachusetts community in 1802.

The Original “Big Cheese”

by Richard Sassaman

ON NEW YEAR’S DAY, 1802, a wagon pulled by four horses drew up to the front door of the White House in Washington, D.C. The wagon carried more than a half-ton of New England cheese for President Thomas Jefferson. It was an extraordinary gift, but then the Massachusetts minister who stepped down to shake the President’s hand was no ordinary man.

Parson John Leland had worked in Virginia as an independent Baptist evangelist before returning in 1792 to Cheshire in the Berkshires. Although all of the surrounding Massachusetts counties were Federalist, Leland led voter drives for Jefferson during the presidential election of February 1801, and celebrated with his congregation when the Republican candidate was elected as the third President of the United States.

Leland excitedly decided his flock must further commemorate the defeat of Alexander Hamilton’s aristocratic Federalists, snobs who looked down on the dreams and the dignity of America’s common people. At last, in Leland’s view, the country had a “People’s President” who understood them.

Cheshire’s dairy farmers excelled, Leland knew, at making cheese. With a little effort (and a lot of milk), the town could produce the world’s greatest cheese for presentation to “the nation’s greatest man,” as Leland referred to Jefferson.

That summer the ambitious dream became a reality. One day all of the milk from nine hundred local, loyal Republican cows was collected and brought into Cheshire, where the population gathered to sing hymns, socialize, and make cheese—so much cheese that the workers needed a cider press. The product of this community effort was a massive cheese wheel four feet four-and-a-half inches in diameter, fifteen inches thick, and weighing 1,235 pounds.

Leland wouldn’t think of shipping his gift to Jefferson. Nothing but hand delivery would do, so in the late fall he and a friend named Darius Brown loaded up the cheese and set off for Washington, D.C. They traveled by wagon or sleigh to the Hudson River, then proceeded by sloop to New York City and Baltimore before continuing by horse-drawn conveyance to the nation’s capital. All along the route people gathered to praise both the cheese

and the President. Leland took advantage of the crowds to preach a few sermons.

Because Jefferson was the first prominent American to promote the study of fossils, he had often been both praised and ridiculed for his interest in the bones of extinct creatures like the woolly mammoth. This trait prompted Cheshire’s gift to be dubbed the “Mammoth Cheese.”

Jefferson, standing by the front door of the White House, warmly welcomed Leland and Brown to the executive mansion. They happily noted that he was dressed simply in black, even wearing shoelaces, as one observer wrote, on “shoes . . . absolutely without buckles, considering them as superfluous and anti-Republican, especially when a man has strings.”

Leland recognized the opportunity for another speech. He read a prepared address, swearing Cheshire’s loyalty to the Constitution and praising Jefferson. The great cheese “is not the last stone in the Bastille,” Leland said, “nor is it of any consequence as an article of worth, but as a free will offering we hope it will be received. The cheese was not made . . . with a view to gain [us]

dignified titles or lucrative offices, but by the personal labor of free-born farmers, without a single slave to assist, for an elective president of the free people.”*

Jefferson ordered the “Cheshire Cheese” placed in the East Room of the White House, dubbing this the “Mammoth Room” in the process. (Later, Jefferson would house his small collection of fossil bones in the same room.)

That same New Year’s Day, Jefferson held a public reception in the East Room. While the Marine band played, the citizens of Washington filed through, shaking hands with the President and exchanging pleasantries. Many of them sampled some of the great cheese; Republi-

can Sunday, January 3, he preached at the religious service that was held weekly in the Capitol during Jefferson’s terms. Once again the response ran along party lines when Leland, looking down at the President in his audience, used as his text a portion of Matthew 12:42: “And behold, a greater than Solomon is here.”

Republicans were delighted, of course. But a typical Federalist response came from Massachusetts congressman Manasseh Cutler, also a minister, who complained that he had to sit and listen to such a “poor, ignorant, illiterate cheesemonger.” Cutler, who had called the cheese “a monument of weakness and folly,” wrote that Leland’s sermon was “a

honor, calling it a “most excellent, far famed and far fetched cheese, superior far in smell, taste, weight, and size, to any ever formed ’neath foreign skies.”

The sixth stanza prayed:

“God bless the Cheese, and kindly bless the makers,/The givers—generous, good, and sweet and fair,/And the receiver, great beyond compare,/All those who shall be happy as partakers;/O! May no traitor to his country’s cause/E’er have a bit of thee between his jaws.”

By the next New Year’s Day sixty pounds of cheese had to be removed from the middle of the wheel because of decay. The remainder, though, graced White House parties for many more months, including the July 4, 1803 public reception in honor of the Louisiana Purchase. One source says the cheese lasted until a presidential reception in 1805, where it was served with cake and a large urn of hot punch. Another rumor has it that whatever remained by that year was dumped into the Potomac River.

The “Cheshire Cheese” reigned unchallenged for thirty-five years, until a New York admirer of outgoing President Andrew Jackson delivered a fourteen-hundred-pound cheese to the White House in 1837. In our more hectic, *Guinness Book of World Records* modern times, Steve Siudzinski of Langes Corners, Wisconsin, made a 34,591-pound cheddar for the Wisconsin Cheese Foundation to exhibit at the 1964 New York World’s Fair. This cheese traveled in a specially-designed, refrigerated, forty-five-foot tractor trailer, a far cry from Leland’s horse-drawn wagon.

Despite later and larger cheeses, the “Mammoth Cheese” has not been forgotten by the people of Cheshire. In 1940 they erected a concrete replica of the cheese and its press, which may be viewed today in a small, well-kept park near the post office on Church Street. ★

Richard Sassaman has spent more than a decade traveling throughout the United States researching American history and customs. He maintains an office in Bar Harbor, Maine.

CULVER PICTURES, NEW YORK CITY



cans lauded it as superb, Federalists claimed it was only “so-so.”

Leland remained in Washington for a few days, to great acclaim. On

**The cheese was not the only oversized gift Jefferson would receive. By coincidence a few months later, some butchers in Philadelphia sent the President a giant piece of veal. Inspired by Jefferson’s book Notes on Virginia, in which he defended American animals against claims by foreign naturalists that the “barbaric” New World produced genetically inferior species, the men shipped to the White House the hind quarter of the largest calf they could find. By the time the meat reached Washington, D.C., it was too rank to be eaten. Still, Jefferson diplomatically praised the gift in a letter to two of the butchers, assuring them that while inedible, the veal retained its beautiful appearance.*

farrago bawled with stunning voice, horrid tone, frightful grimaces, and extravagant gestures.”

“The New World was founded by Columbus, delivered by Washington, and taught by Jefferson,” Leland liked to say. The President soon taught the parson his strict rule against accepting personal gifts while in office: before Leland left town, Jefferson gave him \$200 in payment for the cheese (a generous sixteen cents a pound), money to be distributed back in Cheshire. Then, having excited the nation’s capital for a few days, Leland returned to his Massachusetts congregation.

THE CHEESE stayed on in Washington much longer. Admirers produced a nine-stanza ode in its

In December 1945, Preston Tucker promised the American public "the first completely new car in fifty years." He kept his promise, but met ruin in the process.

Tucker

A Man and His Car

by Mike Mueller

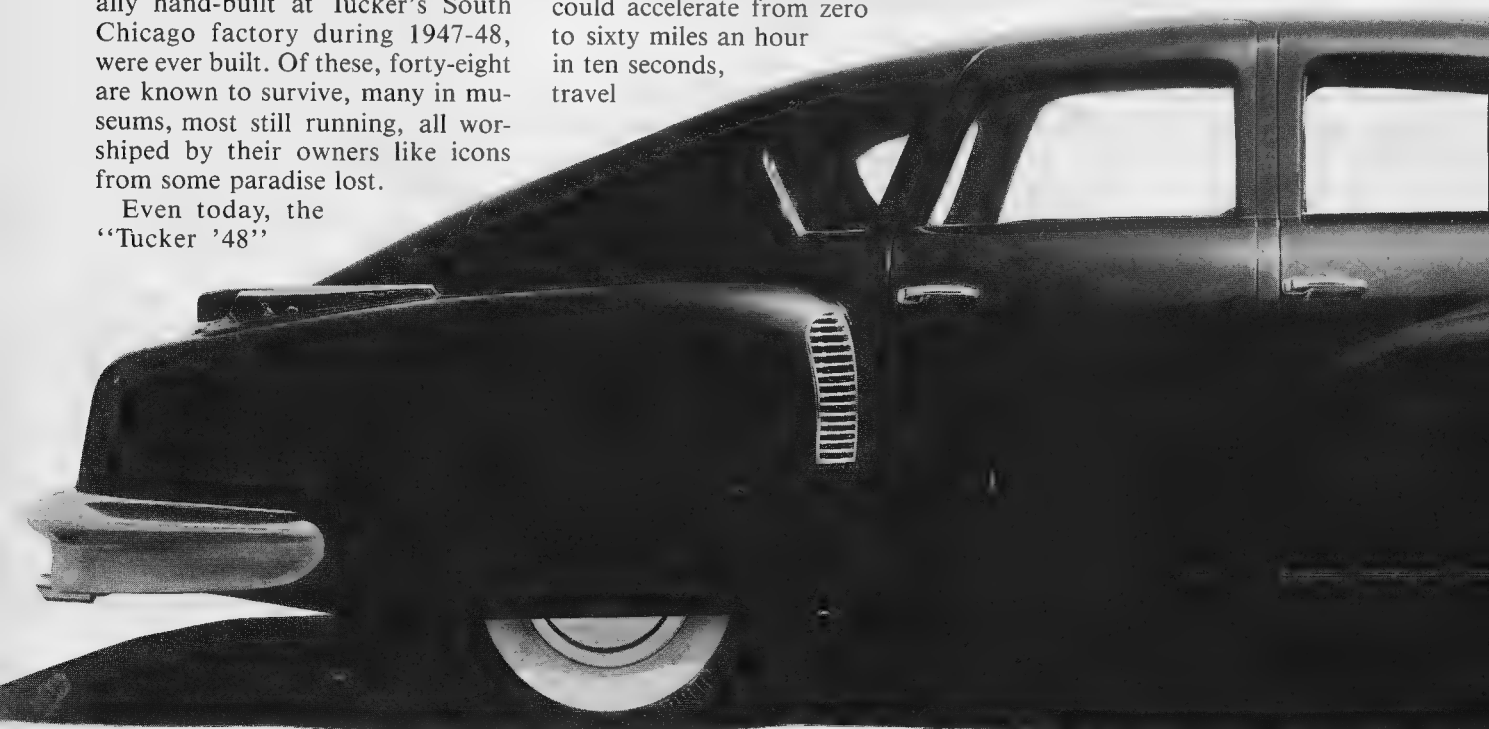
UNTIL PRODUCER George Lucas teamed up with director Francis Ford Coppola to create the film *Tucker: The Man and His Dream*, released in theaters nationwide in August 1988, relatively few Americans knew about or recalled the story of Preston Thomas Tucker and his goal of a better-built, American-made automobile.

Even fewer people had ever seen an actual "Tucker"—and understandably so, because only fifty-one of the revolutionary cars, all virtually hand-built at Tucker's South Chicago factory during 1947-48, were ever built. Of these, forty-eight are known to survive, many in museums, most still running, all worshiped by their owners like icons from some paradise lost.

Even today, the "Tucker '48"

boldly announces it was once a car ahead of its time. "The first completely new car in fifty years" lived up to the claim, from its rear-mounted aluminum engine and low, sloping roofline with four aviation-style doors to the peculiar "Cyclops Eye": the third front headlight that turns with the wheels.

The "Tucker '48" was the most aerodynamic automobile of its day. Thanks to its "slippery" design and six-cylinder, 166-horsepower Franklin helicopter engine, the Tucker could accelerate from zero to sixty miles an hour in ten seconds, travel



well over one hundred miles an hour, and deliver more than twenty miles per gallon.

Inside the car, comfort and safety were the selling points. The rigid, Hudson-like step-down frame, along with the absence of a tunnel for transmission and driveshaft, made for a roomy passenger compartment that also sported excellent crash-proof characteristics. The dash was padded, and threatening protrusions were kept to a minimum. The front seat featured a "crash basement"—a padded expanse into which riders could dive or fall if an accident threatened. But in case the passengers couldn't reach this refuge, the safety-glass windshield was designed to pop out when struck from within.

A BUSINESS VENTURE such as Tucker's, with a product as superior and advanced as his automobile, seems unlikely to fail—but it did.

Some observers feel that Tucker's downfall was the result of a conspiracy—that the "Big Three" (Detroit's established automakers: Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler) and their friends in government set out to ruin him.

Enough evidence exists to support such a theory. Michigan Senator Homer Ferguson was blatantly anti-Tucker. Once referred to as "the Senator from Detroit," Ferguson

has been described by *Car Life's* Gene Booth as a man "many observers assumed to be paying off political debts to Detroit backers" by using his influence against the Chicago automaker.

Others, whether inspired by Ferguson or sincere in their beliefs, have maintained that Tucker was a crook and his car a fake. But, despite accusations and investigations, Tucker wasn't dishonest, at least as far as his car was concerned. The car was real and capable of outperforming every other car on the road. Tom McCahill, veteran auto reviewer for *Mechanix Illustrated*, raved about the "Tucker '48," calling it "one of the greatest performing automobiles ever built this side of the Atlantic."

Ken Purdy, famed automotive journalist for *True* magazine, was equally impressed, comparing Tucker and his car to such automakers and their achievements as Harry Stutz (builder of the "Bearcat," called America's first sports car), Errett Cord (regarded as a genius of innovative automotive styling), and Fred Duesenberg (builder of the most luxurious, expensive, and powerful automobiles of the 1930s).

If Tucker was guilty of anything, it was of being a bit naive. Despite a lifetime of involvement with automobiles, his previous experiences weren't enough to prepare him for the business venture of his life. As *Special Interest Auto's* associate editor Bill Williams put it in 1973, Tucker "was essentially a small-time promoter who'd gone big-time. He

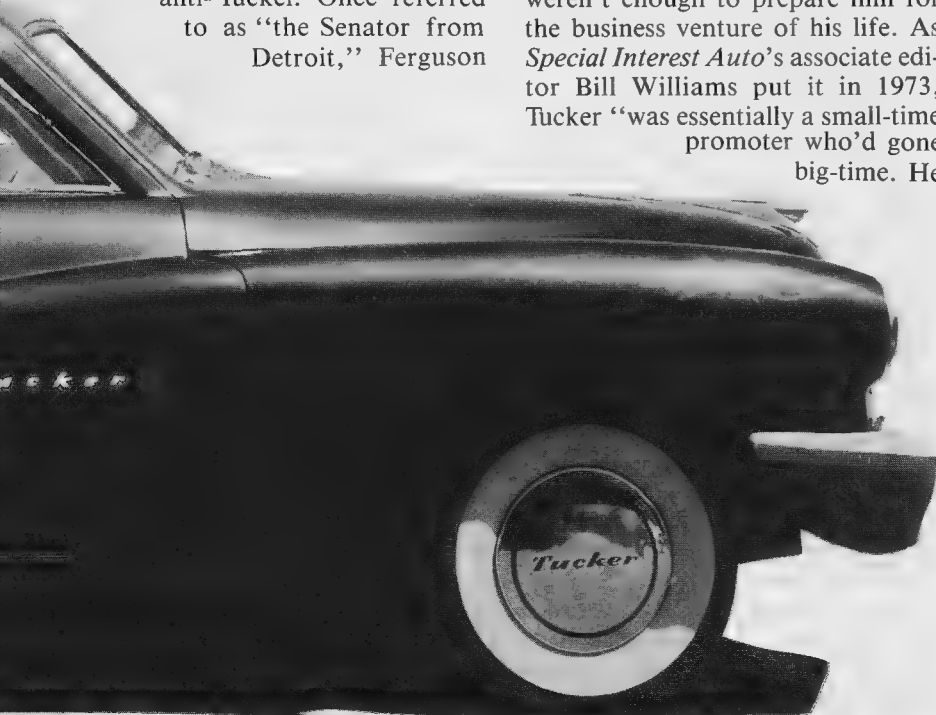
was out of his pond. He didn't know anyone in government, was careless in some of his pencilwork, perhaps in a bit of his talk, too, and when the SEC [Securities and Exchange Commission] jumped him about . . . irregularities, the irregularities did exist."

BORN ON September 21, 1903, at Capac, Michigan, Tucker became a car-lover while still a child. One of his first jobs was as an office boy at Cadillac; he also worked in the Ford plant. He was a policeman for a while, then began selling cars—for Studebaker part-time; for Stutz full-time; for Chrysler as a sales manager; and for Pierce-Arrow as a regional manager.

Tucker had "an enthusiasm for all things automotive, not to mention an ambition to turn that enthusiasm into cash," Michael Jordan has written in *Car and Driver*. Profit undoubtedly was a motivation for Tucker, but his prime goal in life was to build his own car.

In 1929 Tucker met legendary race car maker Harry Miller at the Indianapolis 500, and throughout the next decade he repeatedly attempted to get businesses started with Miller's backing. In December 1931 Tucker tried building airplane engines for the U.S. Army Air Corps, but that effort failed. In January 1934, he sought to take over the failing Marmon Company, a thirty-one-year-old auto-building firm in Indianapolis, but Tucker faltered again. His most noted venture during these years was the 1935 formation of Miller-Tucker, Inc., an attempt to draw Henry Ford into a joint race-car-building effort. A contract for ten "Miller-Ford" Indy racers resulted. Although the cars were delivered, they proved inadequate; an embarrassed Henry Ford pulled out of the project, and Miller-Tucker, Inc., folded.

Tucker next went to work as gen-



The Tucker prototype, the "Tin Goose," differed in numerous details from the fifty "production" cars that followed. Modifications in subsequent cars included a smaller, more efficient engine and back doors hinged at the rear.

eral manager for the Indianapolis Packard agency, rising to a partnership in the business. Then he moved back to the Detroit area, buying a large home in Ypsilanti, Michigan.

Inspired by rumors of war, Tucker formed the Tucker Aviation Corporation. As early as 1937 he began planning a high-speed combat car. The 117-mph vehicle he envisioned was impressive but of no practical use to the armed forces. But military officers were interested in the vehicle's gun turret design, and Tucker received a contract to manufacture it. When war broke out, however, the government confiscated Tucker's patents and royalty rights. Later Tucker brought suit against other businesses for having built turrets to his design without paying royalties.

AT WAR'S END, the time and circumstances finally seemed right for Tucker to make his dream car a reality. The American public, denied new automobiles since 1941, was waiting impatiently for someone to develop a better car. Coupled with this was the government's desire to see new independent businessmen succeed. Before his death President Franklin Roosevelt had promised that the monopoly held on the automaking industry by the "Big Three" would be broken up after the war, and he had guaranteed legal action if qualifying independents were not given a fair chance. As part of Roosevelt's policy, all war supply factories run by the "Big Three" were to be sold to qualified independent buyers.

Seeking such a facility, Tucker began courting the War Assets Administration (WAA) in January 1946. On September 18 he was awarded the huge Dodge facility in Cicero, Illinois, on Chicago's southside.

Used during the war to build B-29 bomber engines, the Dodge facility had been built at a cost of \$170 million. Encompassing 475 acres, it included a machine shop and assembly plant, power plant, offices, shops, and foundries for aluminum and magnesium. At that time the main building, covering ninety-three acres, was the world's largest, representing the greatest expanse of floor space within four walls.

But in a foreshadowing of events to come, Tucker's possession of the facility was immediately threatened. Claiming that Tucker wasn't capable of making payments on the plant, Wilson Wyatt, head of the National Housing Agency, ordered the WAA to award the plant to the Lustron Corporation, a builder of prefabricated metal houses. The Lustron Corporation took over the plant on October 23, but Tucker raised a protest and managed to obtain enough support to regain control.

TUCKER'S proposed automobile had been introduced in December 1945 on the pages of *Pic* magazine. Promotional literature describing "the new 150-horsepower Tucker 'Torpedo'" followed. Although no other American car had yet approached that horsepower figure, Tucker actually was more interested in promoting the vehicle's safety features. To play down the performance image, he later dropped the name "Torpedo," calling his car simply the "Tucker '48." He also promoted the car's "Cyclops Eye" headlight; front fenders that turned with the wheels, letting the side headlights follow the road; disc brakes; fuel injection; and a windshield that popped out on impact. He promised all this for \$1,500—at a time when a more common car—a four-door, six-passenger V-8 Super Deluxe 1946 Ford sedan—sold for about \$1,320.

In addition to buying the biggest manufacturing plant, Tucker hired some of the best professionals in the automotive field. Fred Rockelman, former Plymouth president and Ford sales manager, became Tucker's vice president of sales. Also in the executive ranks were Ray Rausch, former Ford manufacturing supervisor; and Hanson Ames Brown, former vice president of General Motors-Canada.

Tucker's most trusted engineer was Eddie Offutt, one of the best and brightest from the Indy 500 race scene. And, on the day after Christmas 1946, young designer Alex Tremulis, just out of the Air Force and with plenty of high-flying ideas after duty at Wright Field near Dayton, Ohio, was hired to put Tucker's

dreams to sheetmetal.

TUCKER was tall, handsome, a flashy dresser, and a fast talker with an odd habit of using malapropisms that did more to endear him to his listeners than make him appear ignorant. He inspired his employees to work as he did—to the limit. According to the company's advertising manager, Cliff Knoble, Tucker "possessed a warmth and humanness that made men eager to help him."

He also had a knack for sales. Phillip Egan, a member of Tucker's styling staff, described him in *Automobile Quarterly* as a man "who could not only sell refrigerators to Eskimos but also have them liking the refrigerators after the purchase. He was not a polished man, yet had the power to interest others in his ideas." Maybe he wasn't "polished," but Tucker made up for that with enthusiasm and positive thinking.

Tucker was almost as stubborn as he was enthusiastic. In 1949 Ken Purdy described Tucker as "a cheerful, gregarious character, prone to see the bright side of things. However, he is often unpredictable, and friends will concede there may be people easier to get along with. Few who know him are casual about it; he makes strong friendships and bitter enemies." And Tremulis admitted that, although he "admired the man, we didn't get along all of the time. Nevertheless, he was a man determined to build the finest car in the world."

Amazingly, the "Tin Goose," Tucker's hand-built prototype, went from sketch pad in December 1946 to reality in April 1947—less than one hundred days. The car made its official debut before an admiring throng of five thousand at the Tucker plant on June 19.

Hastily built, the "Tin Goose" had its problems. The prototype's enormous, 589-cubic-inch opposed-cylinder engine proved inefficient, and because of its high compression, required massive twenty-four-volt truck batteries to start. No reverse gear was provided, spawning the oft-repeated myth that "Tuckers" couldn't back up. (Subsequent

"regular production" vehicles did back up, and they mounted a more efficient 335-cubic inch Franklin helicopter engine provided by Air-cooled Motors of Syracuse, New York.)

The car also lacked the promised disc brakes, fuel injection, and turnable front fenders (these were replaced by the moveable "Cyclops Eye"). However, enough other progressive features remained—including independent suspension and tubeless tires—to put the "Tucker '48" well above the rest.

EVEN BEFORE he had built a single car, Tucker began financing his operation by selling dealer and distributor franchises. These sales eventually brought him \$10.8 million; but they also quickly attracted the attention of the Securities and Exchange Commission, which, recognizing the franchises as "securities," stepped in. Sales were allowed to continue, but so too did SEC attention.

Then, in October 1946, Tucker proposed a \$20 million stock issue

to finance operations, and the objections turned to accusations. Renewed SEC probes revealed fifteen "irregularities," leading to charges of mail fraud, violations of SEC regulations concerning the sale of stock and securities, and conspiracy to defraud. Specific deviations included falsified statements, unrecorded payments to promoters, questionable payments to Tucker's mother's Ypsilanti, Michigan machine shop (which had made transmissions for some cars and the engine for the "Tin Goose"), and the placement of Tucker's son on the board of directors. The stock issue was stopped even before it actually began.

Then, while the SEC held up the stock issue, Senator Ferguson threatened to have his Surplus Property Committee force the WAA to evict Tucker if he didn't produce sufficient funds to hold the plant. But Tucker

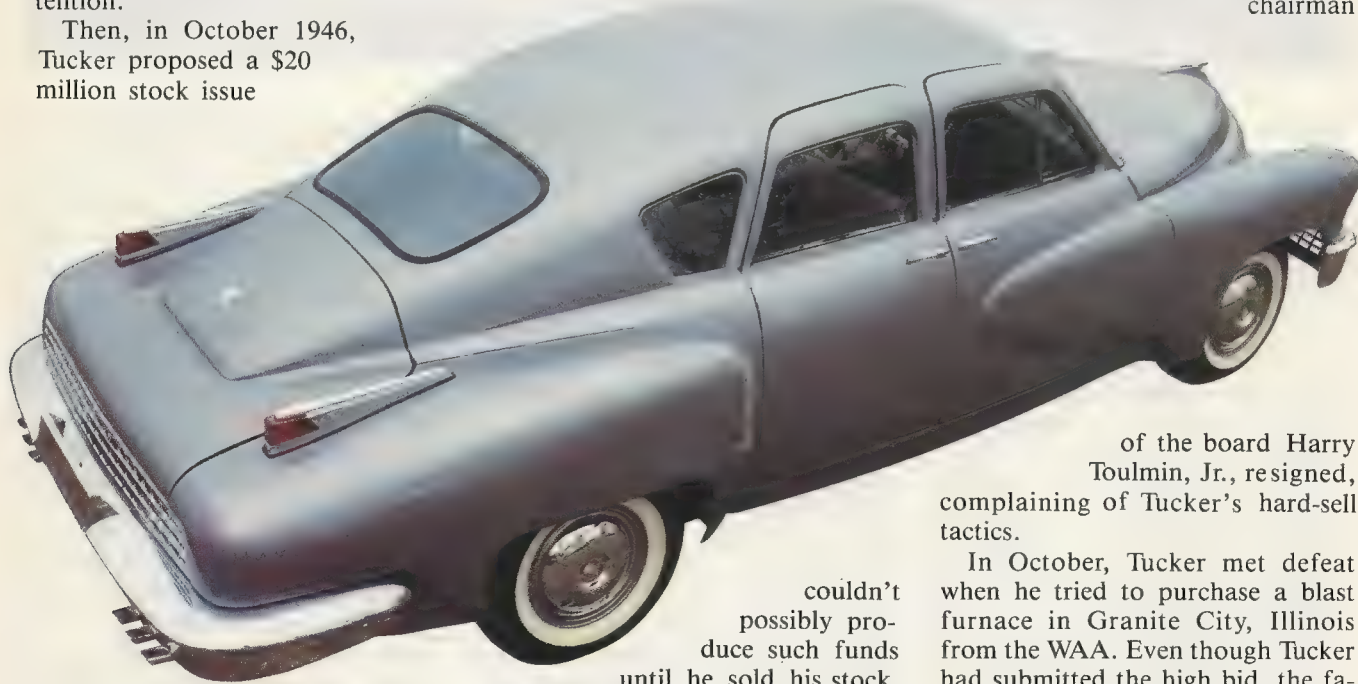
July 1. Although he didn't meet this deadline, by September 13 he had \$15,007,000 from his stock sale.

Was Tucker really dishonest? "Naive, perhaps," *Special Interest Auto's* Ken Gross has concluded, "a little greedy, self-indulgent, ignorant of the complexities of auto manufacturing—all these might have been true, but he really wasn't a crook."

According to Gross, "Tucker simply (and perhaps tragically) didn't sweat the details. Had he done so, some of those almost foolish irregularities and excesses might not have tripped him up."

Cliff Knoble has gone even further, saying that "with all his estimable traits and abilities, Tucker was deficient in certain qualities essential to the successful management of a big business."

TUCKER'S PROBLEMS soon compounded. In September 1947 the Tucker Corporation's chairman



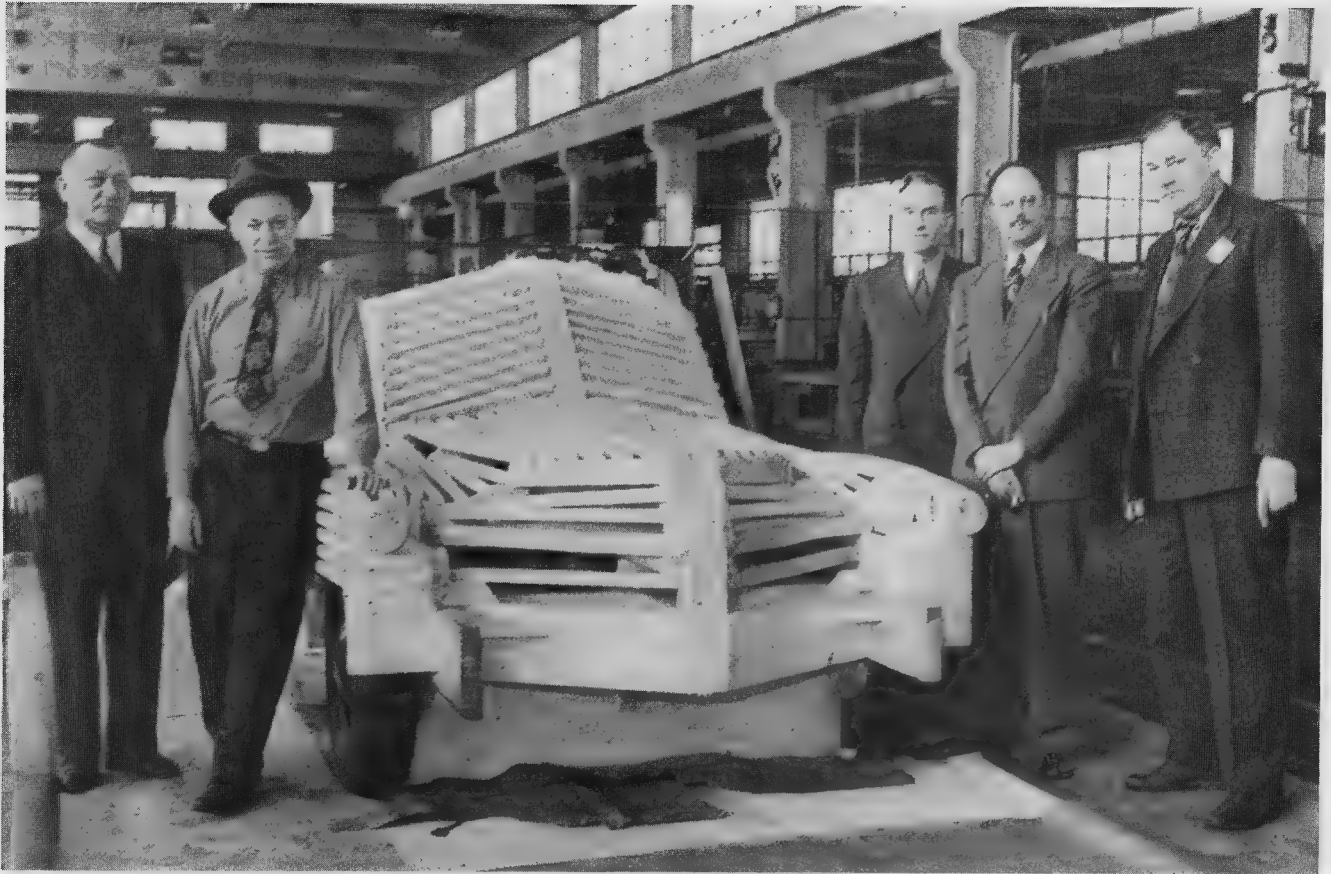
Aerodynamic streamlining and aviation-type doors that curved into the roofline made the "Tucker" one of the most graceful cars of its day. This particular car, restored by Richard Jones and owned by Dave Cammack of Alexandria, Virginia, is "Tucker" number 22.

couldn't possibly produce such funds until he sold his stock.

Tucker countered by bringing in Nevada Senator George Malone, an SEC foe, who threatened to have a committee conduct an investigation of SEC actions. The SEC responded; in June 1947, after a fifty-day delay, the commission allowed Tucker to float his stock, with stipulations that he prove his worth by having \$15 million in the bank by

of the board Harry Toulmin, Jr., resigned, complaining of Tucker's hard-sell tactics.

In October, Tucker met defeat when he tried to purchase a blast furnace in Granite City, Illinois from the WAA. Even though Tucker had submitted the high bid, the facility went to another company. He filed for an injunction in the U.S. Court of Appeals, but his request was denied. Undaunted, in January 1948 he bid on the Cleveland Republic Steel facility. WAA administrator Jesse Larson reportedly assured Tucker that his bid was "receiving the most serious consideration," and again he was the high



During early design stages, Tucker's staff built two clay models of the proposed car. Here stylist Alex Tremulis, second from right, stands with other company employees by the wooden buck for one of the models.

bidder. But in May, Larson declared the bid inadequate. Tucker protested, but was ignored.

At about the same time, the SEC announced the start of a second investigation. On May 28, 1948 SEC officials swarmed into the automaking plant in Cicero, forcing Tucker to halt production work and lay off 1,600 employees. Creditors grew nervous, as did investors; many began filing suit demanding the company go into receivership.

But the real blow came on June 6. In his weekly network radio program, Washington columnist Drew Pearson announced that the Justice Department was preparing an investigation that would "blow the new Chicago auto firm higher than a kite." Overnight, Tucker Corpora-

tion stock plummeted; investors lost \$10 million. Tucker vehemently demanded to know Pearson's source for the information. Later it was learned that confidential information concerning the SEC investigation had been leaked from Senator Ferguson's office to the press. Once news writers and broadcasters heard about the SEC reports, public opinion against Tucker grew daily.

On June 14, 1948 the SEC subpoenaed Tucker Corporation records. Tucker was told the investigation would take ten days; it lasted six months. SEC investigators scoured the country "asking questions, which scared the hell out of dealers and stockholders," Tucker would later recall. On top of that, bad press "frightened our creditors [and] dried up our supplies and parts."

Operations ground to a halt. In August, about five weeks before the factory would have gone into full production (a Tucker claim that Tremulis still supports), the company shut down completely, with only thirty-eight cars completed.

TUCKER INSISTED that the press and federal investigators had used unethical practices against him. He suspected that throughout the SEC investigation there had been leaks to the press. "Newspapers carried stories that could only have come directly from individuals in the SEC or the FBI," Tucker later said. He pointed to regulations under the SEC Act of 1934 that expressly forbade disclosure of information obtained during an investigation.

Then came, as Tucker later recalled, "the opposition's H-bomb—of size and caliber guaranteed to put me and my automobile out of business for keeps." On March 13, 1949, reporter Martin Hayden of the *Detroit News* ran a story detailing the SEC's report. Titled "Gigantic Tucker Fraud Charged in SEC Report," the article contained SEC recommendations that Tucker be tried for conspiracy and for securities and mail fraud.

Tucker demanded to know how the press could have received the report before even he had seen it. He



The day after his Chicago trial for fraud and other charges ended in acquittal, the auto entrepreneur celebrated with a ride in one of his "Tuckers." But the victory was a hollow one; Tucker's corporation had gone into receivership ten months earlier, and his factory would be sold without ever resuming production.

asked to see the recommendations himself, but was refused. Later it was revealed that SEC commissioner Harry A. McDonald, though he denied it, had personally given the report to Hayden in blatant violation of the law. According to Tucker, the SEC's publicized actions "were done more or less openly. But behind the scenes, we got the blows that the referee couldn't see."

TUCKER'S TRIAL began in October 1949. He and seven co-defendants went before the Federal District Court of Chicago facing a thirty-one-count indictment. Tucker alone faced 155 years in prison with

fines up to \$160,000. During the trial, Judge Walter LaBuy said, "to permit the SEC to expose the report to the press and have the District Attorney deny the same right to the defendant shocks the Court's sense of justice, fairness and right."

After four months, on Sunday, January 22, 1950, all eight defendants were acquitted. Tucker had won the battle—but his opponents won the war. The Tucker Corporation had gone into receivership on March 3, 1949.

Following the trial, all company assets, including the "Tucker" automobiles, were sold for eighteen cents on the dollar. After the plant had closed, Offutt and others had returned to the factory on their own time to finish as many additional "Tuckers" as they could; some of the cars, however, were sold incomplete.

As for Tucker, he did his best to pick up the pieces of his life. "A man who has once gotten automobiles into his blood," he said, "can never give them up. A man with a dream can't stop trying to realize

that dream any more than an artist can stop painting, or a composer composing. Other men failed before me. Henry Ford failed twice. Willys failed twice. Today their names are known in every corner of the globe. It's no disgrace to fail against tough odds if you don't admit you're beaten. And if you don't give up."

Tucker didn't give up. In 1951, he went to Brazil to seek backing for another new car. Then, when he was about to get a new project underway, the final blow struck; Tucker was diagnosed as having lung cancer. He died the day after Christmas, 1956.

And with the man went the dream. ★

University of Illinois journalism graduate Mike Mueller is a member of the Tucker Automobile Club of America and managing editor of Mustang Monthly and Super Ford magazines. His article on the sinking of the USS Indianapolis appeared in the June 1985 issue of this publication.

Lights and Shadows *Continued from page 20*

termine how many assassins were involved.

The number of shots, as recalled by various eyewitnesses, range from three to five.

More than fifty persons thought that some of the shots came from near the grassy knoll in Dealey Plaza. One witness, Kennedy aide Kenneth O'Donnell, was riding in a car behind the President's limousine. He later stated that he heard two shots coming from the knoll. William and Gail Newman were standing at the base of the knoll with their two children, facing the motorcade, when they heard firing apparently coming from just behind them. To shield their children from the crossfire, they threw themselves on them.

A related puzzle is the apparent presence near the knoll of one or more men who identified themselves as Secret Service agents but who might not have been. Moments after the shots, Dallas patrolman Joe Smith ran into the parking lot beyond the grassy knoll. There he encountered a man who showed him Secret Service credentials. A number of other witnesses reported similar encounters—being “turned back” from the knoll by men who said they were Secret Service agents.

Julius Hardie, a Dallas businessman, says he saw two men with rifles near the knoll hours before the motorcade arrived. “I thought it was the Secret Service up there,” he recalls. “Then after we lost the President, I figured the Secret Service never wanted to admit they had riflemen there, because they didn't get any shots off against the assassin.”

The Secret Service asserted that it had deployed no agents on or near the knoll.

The “Magic Bullet”

The Warren Commission concluded that three shots—no more, no less—had been fired at the President. This finding was based in part on the three expended rifle shells found at the sixth floor “assassin's perch” and on a time-sequence study of bullet impacts as apparently shown on the motion picture film taken by bystander Abraham Zapruder.

The Commission further deduced that since one of the three shots shattered Kennedy's skull and another missed the car, the third had to have inflicted all of the remaining wounds on Kennedy and Connally—seven in all.

These wounds were attributed to a bullet designated CE (Commission Exhibit) 399. In time this would become known as the “Magic Bullet.”

The Warren Commission said that the bullet, fired from a distance of about two hundred feet, entered Kennedy's back, came out near his Adam's apple, hit Connally in the back, tore through his chest, went through his wrist, then entered his thigh. Strangely, the bullet said to have caused these wounds, found on a stretcher in Parkland Hospital, was pristine in appearance, showing virtually no disfiguration.

The controversy over the “Magic Bullet” has continued ever since.

To many viewers, the Zapruder film seems to show that Kennedy and Connally were hit by two separate shots rather than by one. Indeed, that is the way both Connally and his wife Nellie, who was sitting next to him, remember the event.

Dr. Cyril Wecht, one of the nation's leading forensic scientists, was a member of the House Select Committee's medical panel. He made a dramatic comparison of the “Magic Bullet” with other bullets of identical specifications. One, fired into cotton wadding, bore greater deformity than CE 399. Another was fired through a goat's rib to emulate the fracturing of Connally's rib; it showed significant deformity. Yet another was fired through a cadaver's wrist to replicate Connally's wrist wound; the bullet was smashed almost beyond recognition.

The Select Committee was not persuaded by Wecht's exhibits. Although it had concluded that a fourth shot had probably been fired from near the grassy knoll, its members generally reaffirmed the Warren Commission's finding that Oswald had fired the bullets that killed Kennedy and wounded Connally.

Today Dr. Wecht practices as a forensic pathologist in Pittsburgh. He recalls: “The eight other medical experts on the House panel had, conservatively, one hundred thousand shootings in their experience. I challenged them to show me one—just one—bullet that did what CE 399 did. Document a single case. They could not tell me of one such bullet.

“Then,” Wecht says, “I asked them to reproduce the ‘Magic Bullet’ sequence in a re-enactment. They refused. They even had the audacity to say it would be ‘too expensive.’

“The Magic Bullet. Kafka could not have come up with a more bizarre treatment,” Wecht declares.

Dr. Paul Hoch, of Berkeley, California, a physicist, computer programmer, and nationally noted assassination researcher, disagrees. He publishes *Echoes of Conspiracy*, a newsletter on the assassination. “The ‘Magic Bullet,’ like it or not, has been vindicated,” says Hoch. “The House Committee had a panel of ballistic experts analyze the trajectories of the bullets fired from the rear of Kennedy. They found that their paths of flight started from a small area of common origin on the sixth floor—quite in keeping with the single-bullet notion. The science of ballistics says it's so.”

Pennsylvania Senator Arlen Specter concurs: “At the time of the Warren Commission I was a counsel. I am the one most closely associated with the single-bullet theory. Back then, I remember saying: ‘I don't think people are going to believe it this year, next year, or a hundred years from now. This will be challenged today, tomorrow, and forever.’

“The point, though, is that it is true. It has also been confirmed by a chemical analysis. It is, I feel, the single-bullet *conclusion*, not a *theory*.”

Critics, perhaps fulfilling Specter's prophecy, contend that the findings of the ballistic and chemical tests are

One of the most controversial pieces of physical evidence from the assassination is Warren Commission Exhibit 399, later dubbed the "Magic Bullet" (below). Said by the Commission to have wounded both Kennedy and Governor John Connally, the bullet shows surprisingly little disfiguration.

not all that conclusive. For them, the flight of CE 399 remains a credulity-defying anomaly.

Dr. Robert Shaw, the surgeon who operated on Governor Connally, states: "I had never seen a bullet that had caused as much bony damage as the one in his case, and remain a pristine bullet."

It would appear that the single-bullet theory—like so many other aspects of the assassination—has to date been neither conclusively proven nor refuted.

Figures in the Windows

The witness most crucial to the government scenario of the assassination was Howard Brennan. When the presidential motorcade entered Dealey Plaza, the forty-five-year-old steamfitter was sitting on a low wall directly across Elm Street from the Book Depository. He claimed to have seen a man fire a shot from the sixth-floor corner window of the building. But Brennan, who had poor eyesight, was unable to pick accused assassin Oswald out of a police line-up.

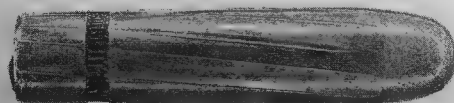
Because Brennan was the government's key eyewitness to the assassination, it was later presumed that his description of the gunman served as the basis for the alert broadcast by Dallas police shortly after the shooting. But as was later shown, it would have been next to impossible for Brennan to have obtained a clear view of anyone behind the sixth-floor window. The angle upward was very sharp, and the window was partly open, blocking his line of vision.*

Brennan didn't identify Oswald as the man in the window until four months after the assassination, when he testified before the Warren Commission. He was the only witness claiming to have seen Oswald shooting from the sixth-floor window.

The House Select Committee chose not to use Brennan's testimony, considering it to be unreliable.

Another bystander, Arnold Rowland, reported that fifteen minutes before the shooting he saw a white man in a sixth-floor window holding a rifle across his chest. He also saw a black man on the same floor, but in an-

**Some critics claim that the description of the gunman originated not with Brennan but with the Dallas police. Its origin is still a matter of controversy.*



C.E. 399 8/23/78



other window.

The man with the rifle was standing at the southwest corner of the building—the corner closest to the grassy knoll. Oswald was alleged to have fired from the southeast corner.

"The FBI," Rowland told a reporter, "just the same as told me to forget it. They didn't take it down in the notations as such."

Eyewitness Carolyn Walther told the FBI that

just minutes before the shooting she saw two men on the sixth floor. One had a gun. "The FBI," she says, "tried to make me think what I saw was boxes."

Ruby Henderson also said she saw two men at an upper window.

All three—Rowland, Walther, and Henderson—thought the men they saw were guards assigned to protect the President. None of the three witnesses could identify Oswald as being one of the men. None actually saw the shots being fired.

Among the more intriguing clues relating to the events in Dealey Plaza is eight-millimeter motion picture footage of the setting taken by Charles L. Bronson, an onlooker at the motorcade, a few minutes before the shots were fired. This so-called "Bronson film" may show two persons, not just one, in a sixth-floor window of the Texas School Book Depository.

Bronson took the film to the FBI in Dallas a few days after the assassination. Bureau agents viewed the sequence at standard speed rather than in slow-motion, and concluded that the Book Depository could not be seen in it.

Years later, a slow-speed viewing by Bronson and others revealed the Depository.

Robert Groden, a film consultant for the House Select Committee, "enhanced" a strip of the film for more detailed viewing. "The film catches the sixth-floor window in the upper edge of more than ninety frames," he says. "It shows two figures. There may even be a third. You can make out one figure walking back and forth. It may show the sniper's nest actually being completed just before the shots were fired."

The House Committee concluded its investigation before having an opportunity to view the film. The panel did, however, recommend to the Department of Justice that the FBI use state-of-the-art techniques to enlarge

Controversy surrounds the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle found on the sixth floor of the Depository. The Warren Commission concluded that Oswald, using this bolt-action weapon, had fired three shots and registered two hits on the motorcade within about seven seconds. But expert marksmen have been unable to duplicate this feat.

the film sequence. After nine years, the Justice Department said it could not obtain the release of the original film by Bronson.

According to Groden, "Bronson and his lawyer simply wanted to be present while the FBI studied the original. The FBI rejected their request. The Department of Justice, of course, had the power to subpoena the film but chose not to do so. They really didn't want to see what was on that film."

The Phantom-Like Oswald

Accused assassin Lee Harvey Oswald seems to have had a phantom-like quality at the time of the assassination.

The killing shots were fired at almost precisely 12:30 P.M. Some ninety seconds later, Dallas police officer Marrion Baker and building manager Roy Truly confronted a seemingly calm Oswald on the second floor of the Book Depository.

Mrs. Robert Reid, a clerical supervisor, said she saw Oswald drinking a Coca-Cola on the second floor at about that time.

Bonnie Ray Williams, a warehouse employee, was on the sixth floor at about noon to eat his lunch. He later testified that he was there until 12:20 P.M. and had seen no one there.

Carolyn Arnold Johnston, a secretary at the Book Depository, knew Oswald. She said she saw him in the second floor lunch room at 12:25 P.M. She told a *Dallas Morning News* reporter: "He was sitting there in one of the booth seats. He was alone and appeared to be having lunch." The FBI misstated the time of her sighting as 12:15 P.M.

Oswald had claimed he was in the Book Depository lunchroom at 12:30 P.M. Some researchers feel that official inquiries never proved that he was anywhere else.

Oswald's link to the alleged assassination rifle has also been questioned. He was said to have ordered it by U.S. postal money order under the name A. Hidell. The money order led to Oswald's post office box. Skeptics wonder why a would-be assassin would purchase a weapon in a way that left a clear paper trail.

A homemade brown paper bag, about three feet long, was found near the sniper's window. Buell Wesley Fra-



zier gave Oswald a ride to the Book Depository on the morning of November 22. Oswald carried a large brown bag with him. According to Frazier, Oswald held one end of the bag in his hand and tucked the other into his armpit. But if the bag contained the dismantled Mannlicher-Carcano rifle, which measures about a yard long, he could not have fit it under his arm.

During a search of the sixth floor, a police officer found the rifle, wedged between book cartons. Three expended shells from the rifle were on the floor near the corner window. An unfired fourth bullet was still in the rifle's chamber.

No fingerprints were found on the outside of the rifle, but Oswald's palm print was discovered on the barrel underneath the stock. This may have shown that Oswald had handled the weapon when it was disassembled. But skeptics question how and when the print was made.

Both the alleged assassin and his purported murder weapon pose problems of plausibility regarding marksmanship. Oswald was at best a fair shot, according to his Marine Corps firing records. The bolt-action Mannlicher-Carcano, vintage 1940, was considered by some experts to be inaccurate and unreliable.

The Warren Commission and the House Select Committee both had master marksmen try to duplicate Oswald's supposed shooting achievement. Using a rickety rifle with a slightly misaligned scope, Oswald was said to have fired three shots at a moving target within a period of 4.8 to slightly over 7 seconds. Moreover, in that firing sequence, he supposedly made two *hitting* shots within from 4.8 to 5.6 seconds.

The Warren Commission had three expert sharpshooters, using a rifle similar to Oswald's but with a corrected scope, fire at *fixed* targets. They could just barely match his alleged performance.

Years later, the House Committee had four master marksmen attempt "to fire three shots, at least two of which score 'kills' with an elapsed time of 1.7 seconds or less between any two shots." Not one could do it.

The Troubling Autopsy

Late on the afternoon of November 22, Jacqueline Kennedy, still stunned by the gruesome death of her hus-

Both government commissions concluded that all of Kennedy's wounds were the result of shots originating from behind the motorcade. But Parkland Hospital doctors who struggled to save the President observed a wound in the front of his throat that they thought was an entrance wound.

band, recoiled against the mere mention of an autopsy. She had to be persuaded to consent to the procedure. Rather than insisting that medical experts select the site and participants for the autopsy, government officials left the choice to Mrs. Kennedy. Because her husband had served in the Navy, she designated Bethesda Naval Hospital near Washington, D.C.

The autopsy took place in the hospital's morgue and lasted from about 8 P.M. to past 11 P.M.

The autopsy report noted that Kennedy was forty-six years of age, seventy-two-and-a-half inches tall, weighed one hundred and seventy pounds, and had blue eyes and reddish-brown hair. Aside from that basic description, almost every aspect of the examination ultimately fell under skeptical, after-the-fact scrutiny.

Amazingly, no experienced forensic pathologist—no one expert in examining gunshot wounds—was on hand.

Commander James J. Humes, director of laboratories at the Naval Medical School, was in charge of the autopsy. Two Naval Hospital doctors assisted him. Of the three, only one had even the slightest experience in bullet wounds.

In bitter hindsight, a nationally renowned forensic pathologist, Dr. Milton Helpert, decried the handling of the autopsy. Helpert, as chief medical examiner of New York City, had performed thousands of autopsies. He said of the Kennedy autopsy: "The tragic, tragic thing is that a relatively simple case was horribly botched from the beginning, and then the errors were compounded."



In addition to examining official and unofficial records at the National Archives and the Assassination Archives and Research Center in Washington, D.C., Edward Oxford's research for this article included interviews with nearly all of the individuals quoted in the text. Persons contacted included Senator Arlen Specter, Professor G. Robert Blakey, surgeon Dr. Robert McClelland, pathologist Dr. Cyril Wecht, physicist Dr. Paul Hoch, photo-analyst Robert Groden, archivist Conover Hunt, journalists Earl Golz and Seth Kantor, Jack Ruby's brother Earl Ruby, attorneys David W. Belin, Bernard Fensterwald, and James Lesar, and assassination researchers Mary Ferrell, Larry Ray Harris, Sylvia Meagher, Gary Shaw, Josiah Thompson, and Harold Weisberg.

The three doctors placed at center stage in the autopsy room had to contend with almost unnerving pressure. More than a score of officials—including Secret Service and FBI agents—crowded in on them. The doctors knew that both Jacqueline Kennedy and Attorney General Robert Kennedy were in the building, awaiting completion of the autopsy. And a Kennedy aide

continually urged them to complete their work so that the body could be released to lie in state.

About fifty photographs and a dozen x-rays were made of the President's body. These were immediately turned over to the Secret Service.

That night the autopsy team concluded that one bullet had gone through Kennedy's skull and that another, thought to be the one found on a stretcher at Parkland Hospital, had entered his back. The latter bullet, the doctors surmised, had become dislodged during cardiac massage.

The next morning Humes called Dr. Malcom Perry at Parkland Hospital. He learned that the doctors there had observed a bullet wound in the front of the President's neck. The Parkland doctors had cut into the throat for a tracheotomy, obscuring the outlines of the wound. (Conversely, the doctors in Dallas, who had not turned Kennedy over during their intensive efforts to save him, had been unaware of the wound in his back.)

With the President's body lying in state at the White House, it was now too late for Humes to take a second look at the throat wound.

At his home on Saturday evening, working from the notes he had made during the autopsy, Humes made a first draft of the official report. Later that night he burned certain of his original autopsy notes, subsequently claiming he did not want to have papers blotched with the President's blood falling into the hands of the public. By Sunday night, he finished the report.

In one key element of his report Humes differed sharply from the conclusions that had been reached by his autopsy team on Friday night. He decided that the bullet that entered Kennedy's back must have exited through his throat, causing the throat wound.

But during the autopsy Humes and the other doctors had been unable to find any lane of exit when they

Oswald, shown below during a late-night press conference at Dallas police headquarters, denied that he had shot the President. Contradictory evidence and testimony places him both on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository and in the lunch room of the building at the moment of Kennedy's assassination.

probed the back wound. And for reasons even now unrevealed, a high-ranking military officer in the autopsy room was said to have prevented the doctors from performing dissection to locate a bullet-track for the wound.

The doctors at Parkland Hospital, who saw the throat wound before carrying out the tracheotomy, thought it was an *entry* wound—suggesting that a shot had been fired from *in front* of Kennedy.

The “autopsy of the century” left these baffling matters unresolved.

Drawing heavily upon Humes’s report, the Warren Commission later concluded that a single assassin had shot downward from the sixth floor of the Book Depository. One bullet had penetrated Kennedy’s skull from behind, killing him. Another bullet, which supposedly also struck Connally, entered the President’s back near his neck and emerged through his throat.

For a year and a half following Kennedy’s death, the autopsy x-rays, photographs, and related materials were held by the Secret Service. For a period of about six months thereafter they were retained by Robert Kennedy.

In 1966 the autopsy evidence was transferred to the National Archives. At the behest of the Kennedy family, these materials were sealed from non-governmental viewing for five years. (Kennedy family and governmental permission is still required for access.) Well-intentioned though this decision may have been, it fanned many arguments about the President’s wounds.

In 1968 a four-expert medical panel summoned by Attorney General Ramsey Clark studied the autopsy materials. The Rockefeller Commission’s five-physician panel did the same in 1975. And, in 1978, the nine-member medical panel of the House Select Committee re-examined the evidence. All concurred that Kennedy had been struck from above and behind by two shots.

The House panel, however, was quite critical of the autopsy procedures, stating that the military physicians at Bethesda had wrongly located Kennedy’s head wound four inches below the actual wound. The autopsy team had also incorrectly placed the back wound two inches too high, according to the House investigators.



Humes apologized for burning his autopsy notes and reluctantly accepted the panel’s findings on the location of the fatal head wound. His two assistants, however, steadfastly declined to endorse its “new” location. And all three doctors stood by their original positioning of the back wound.

Unsettling thoughts concerning the autopsy still linger.

Dr. Wecht, for one, points out: “That four inches and that two inches may not mean much to the lay person. But these seemingly small differences, calculated into new angles of trajectory, point to startling possibilities. The angles may work back to a second gunman, firing not from the sixth floor, but from somewhere else in the Book Depository—or even from the nearby Dal-Tex building.”

The apparent lack of alignment in Kennedy and Connally’s respective wounds has led some critics to maintain that a single bullet could not have possibly traveled in a straight line to cause those wounds as claimed by the Warren Commission. But others suggest that the “Magic Bullet” was repeatedly deflected during its passage through the bodies of the two men.

At Parkland Hospital, Dr. Charles Carrico, one of the first doctors to view the President’s wounds in Trauma Room No. 1, had perceived that the bullet hole in Kennedy’s throat was an entrance wound, not an exit wound. Dr. Malcolm Perry at first so described it to reporters. And nurse Audrey Bell has recalled that “It was a small, round wound. Like an entry wound.”

Last summer Dr. Robert McClelland, along with three other doctors who had tried to save Kennedy at Parkland Hospital, visited the National Archives to view the autopsy photographs. McClelland says:

“The photographs done at the autopsy matched up with what I recalled seeing in Parkland. My own impression is that a bullet could have come from toward the front and blown out the side of the President’s head. It was not necessarily a shot from the back that struck his head. I had seen the massive head wound. I had looked twice at the Zapruder film and studied where a shot bursts the President’s head. His head snaps back. Then the limousine speeds up, jolting his head forward.”

Fatefully, there were several elements of autopsy evi-

Questions remain regarding the motives of Oswald killer Jack Ruby (seen below in front of the Texas School Book Depository during his murder trial). Ruby was shown to have underworld connections, and, some speculate, could have been following orders when he shot Oswald. But, to his death Ruby claimed he had acted on his own.

dence that forensic experts never could—and probably never will—examine. In 1966 it was learned that the President's brain, certain photographs of his chest, and several microscopic tissue slides—apparently at one time all held by the Kennedy family—were “missing” from the assassination files.

Some medical experts regret that these materials are apparently now beyond the reach of forensic science. Such evidence might have helped to ascertain how many bullets were fired, and from where the shooting took place.

The Tippit Killing

The death of Dallas police officer J. D. Tippit also seems to present odd, unexplained elements. Key witness Helen Markham Grant, observing Oswald in a lineup, had difficulty identifying him as Tippit's killer. Domingo Benavides, who watched from his truck fifteen feet away as a man shot Tippit with a revolver, later was not positive that Oswald was the man.

Warren Reynolds followed the gunman for a short stretch. Weeks after Tippit's death, the FBI showed Reynolds a photo of Oswald; he could not positively identify him as the fleeing man. Two days later, in a crime that has never been solved, Reynolds was shot in the head. A few months thereafter, he would testify that Oswald was the man in the photo.

Frank Wright said the gunman wore a long coat and after killing Tippit had driven away in a gray car at high speed. And Acquilla Clemmons stated that she saw two men at the scene. One, she said, had a gun. After the shooting they had run in opposite directions.

T.F. Bowley recalled: “I was just turning the corner in my car. There was the police officer, lying in the street next to his patrol car. I could see a woman in a sort of white uniform [witness Helen Markham Grant] near the bus stop on the corner. I missed the shooting by a matter of seconds. I knew first aid, but there wasn't much I could do for the officer. He was far gone.”

“A fellow [Domingo Benavides] was trying to work the police radio. But he didn't know how. I took the microphone and called the dispatcher to get help. Pretty soon an ambulance showed up. People gathered at the scene.”

Significantly, Bowley was the only person at the scene



known to have checked his watch. It said 1:10 P.M. The Warren Commission put the time of the shooting at 1:15 P.M. By the Commission's chronology of events, Oswald would have been unable to reach the scene by 1:10 P.M.

Tippit's clipboard was in his patrol car, but a police officer testified that the police investigators never bothered to read its contents. A researcher later viewed a copy of its record of calls. There was no entry

for the alert that had been broadcast describing a suspect in the President's shooting.

Five persons told of seeing Tippit a short time before the shooting. He was parked in his squad car near the roadway that Oswald used to reach Oak Cliff.

At the rooming house in Oak Cliff where Oswald lived, housekeeper Earlene Roberts said a police car halted in front just after Oswald returned to his room at 1:00 P.M. The car sounded its horn. Roberts saw the car slowly drive away before Oswald emerged.

The four bullets fired into Tippit were too mangled to be traced to Oswald's—or any other—revolver. And they didn't quite match up, in terms of their manufacture, with the four empty shells found near the scene.

Dallas researcher Larry Ray Harris has, in the course of years, retraced every inch of Oswald's alleged “get-away” route in Oak Cliff and spoken with scores of residents in the neighborhood about the Tippit killing.

“The shooting of Officer Tippit,” Harris says, “has been relegated to footnote status. What happened at Patton Avenue and Tenth Street may be central to understanding the assassination. But it has been overshadowed by the killing of the President and the murder of Oswald. At this late date there may be no hope of resolving the Tippit murder. It may be lost to history.”

“On the surface the case against Oswald in the Tippit killing is open and shut. But it does not stand up to close scrutiny. In their haste to cinch the case against Oswald, the Dallas police misrepresented some facts and withheld others. The Warren Commission accepted the police findings as handed to them. The Commission clearly thought of the Tippit case as being of secondary importance.”

The Nightclub Owner

As with many key characters in the assassination drama,

hard-edged Jack Ruby could be read several ways.

Tony Zoppi, a former entertainment columnist for the *Dallas Morning News*, was a close acquaintance of Ruby for twelve years. Zoppi, who still lives in Dallas, clearly remembers the raffish, rough-and-ready nightclub owner:

"Jack was a kind of Damon Runyon character right out of 'Guys and Dolls.' He was all over Dallas. You'd see him everywhere. A sort of night person.

"The day of the assassination," Zoppi says, "Jack came by my office to see me. It's right near Dealey Plaza. But I wasn't around. So he went down to the advertising department. Every Friday he'd come by and put in his ad for the Carousel Club."

Ruby prided himself on being loyal, and would go out of his way to help friends fallen on hard times. But he had a fierce temper. One retired Dallas policeman recalls: "He had handcuffs in the back room of the Carousel Club. Some joker give him a hard time, Jack'd cuff him and then beat him up."

Seth Kantor had been a reporter covering the Kennedy visit to Dallas. He was later to write a book titled *Who Was Jack Ruby?* Today he is a journalist based in Washington, D.C.

"A half hour after the shooting," he recalls, "I spoke with Jack in a corridor at Parkland Hospital. He was trying to find out whether Kennedy was going to live. He was talking about taking his ad out of the paper and closing the club if the President died."

Time and again that day and the next, Ruby was glimpsed in and about the police building where Oswald was being held. Acquaintances thought Ruby was just being himself—being where things were happening. Researchers have speculated that he was stalking his man.

Ruby portrayed himself to the Warren Commission as part-avenger, part-patriot: "I had the gun in my right hip pocket, and impulsively, if that is the correct word here, I saw him and that is all I can say. I didn't care what happened to me. I think I used the words, 'You killed my President, you rat.' The next thing, I was down on the floor."

Ruby, according to Congressional investigators, had interests in illegal gambling, narcotics, and prostitution. His business dealings included associations with underworld figures in Chicago, Dallas, Havana, Los Angeles, and New York. At the same time he seemed to be well acquainted with Dallas political figures and police.

The House Select Committee quoted mobster John Roselli as referring to Jack Ruby as "one of our boys." Roselli implied Ruby had murdered Oswald to keep him from talking about Oswald's mob contacts.

Ruby was, in Kantor's view, "not that high up in the mob hierarchy. He was on the edges of things. But it's very possible he could be put up to the Oswald killing. Sort of play on the idea that he'd be doing something for his country. That way his manipulators could get the job done. And he would figure he had done 'the right thing'—and not face any big punishment for it."

In fact, many congratulatory telegrams and letters ar-

rived at the County Jail for Ruby. They came from citizens in many parts of the United States, praising him for killing "the man who killed Kennedy."

Ruby was sentenced to death for slaying Oswald, but his conviction was overturned. A new trial was set. He never made it. In December 1966, when it was thought he had pneumonia, Ruby was admitted to Parkland Hospital. Cancer had spread throughout his body.

Ruby's brother Earl visited him, concealing a tape recorder in his briefcase. He asked whether Ruby had any confessions to make. Jack said he had acted on his own in shooting Oswald.

He recounted how he had made an illegal left-turn on empty Main Street near the police building. This saved him a little time in getting to a parking lot. Then he walked to the Western Union building.

"If I hadn't of taken that left-turn," Ruby said, "I would have gotten to the police building a little later. I wouldn't have seen Oswald. The difference was thirty seconds, one way or another."

Jack Ruby died on January 3, 1967.

Ruby's brother sold the tape in record form, using the proceeds to help to pay for Jack's burial.

Contradictions & Ambiguities

A NOVA television documentary on the assassination, televised in November 1988, pointed out that "modern forensic science, ballistics, acoustical analyses, chemical tests, photography, autopsy records" seem only to bring us part-way to an answer.

What, scientifically speaking, can bring us closer? NOVA suggests: "There could be a new rifle test. A new acoustics test. An examination of the brain—if it is ever found. An analysis for blood on the 'Magic Bullet' But an ultimate solution may lie outside the realm of science."

Kennedy researcher Josiah Thompson is now a private investigator in San Francisco. In the last decade or so he has investigated scores of homicides. Thompson observes:

"In these cases, you start with an event that is obscure, confusing, ambiguous. The more you investigate, the clearer the event becomes. It's like putting together a puzzle, piece by piece—you wind up with a complete picture.

"The strange thing about the Kennedy case is that it works in reverse. The more it has been investigated, the less it is understood, the less clear it becomes. The pieces don't make a picture. Now, twenty-five years after the event, almost everything about it is still odd, ambiguous, mysterious." ★

Free-lance writer Edward Oxford works out of New York City. His narrative of the Kennedy assassination, told through the recollections of some thirty eyewitnesses he interviewed, appeared in the November 1988 issue of this publication.

The final article in this series, considering aspects of the Kennedy assassination that relate to U.S. intelligence agencies, foreign intrigue, and organized crime, will appear in the February issue.

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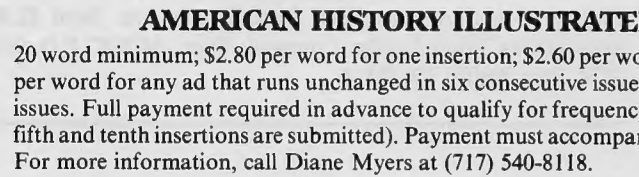
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A quarter-century has passed since the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, and a succession of investigations and commissions have probed and deliberated on the circumstances of his death. Yet questions still remain in the minds of many Americans regarding the identity of Kennedy's assassin or assassins, what motives led to the crime, and whether a conspiracy involving organized crime or the U.S. or foreign governments led to the killing. Lingering questions also touch upon the physical evidence that supposedly linked the shooting to Marxist Lee Harvey Oswald. Assassination-related objects preserved in the Warren Commission files in the National Archives (above) include the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle discovered on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository after Kennedy was shot, Oswald's passport and diary, four rifle cartridges (three empty, one unfired) left in the Depository storeroom, and recovered bullets, including the so-called "Magic Bullet" found on a stretcher in Dallas's Parkland Hospital. An article examining some key areas of the controversy surrounding Kennedy's death appears in this issue.